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# MERTON COLLEGE

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VIEW BY LOGGAN (1675)

University of Oxford

COLLEGE HISTORIES

# MERTON COLLEGE

BY

BERNARD W. HENDERSON, M.A.

FELLOW AND LIBRARIAN OF MERTON COLLEGE

FELLOW OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

LONDON

F. E. ROBINSON

20 GREAT RUSSELL STREET, BLOOMSBURY

1899

LF645
H9

GENERAL

Printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.
At the Ballantyne Press

CUSTODI ET SCHOLARIBUS

DOMUS SCHOLARIUM

DE

MERTON

120067

# PREFACE

This book is strictly a College history: that is, I have sought to avoid dealing with the general history of the University of Oxford except in so far as this itself affected, and was in turn affected by, the history of the College. The first part of this book consists of a narrative of events in chronological order: the second, mainly of an account of the buildings of the College. For so many have been the controversies concerning these, so lively is the interest and admiration they excite, and so great therefore is the necessary display of evidence quarried in the search for facts to help end the controversies and (if it may so chance) for some gratification of the interest, that this division into parts seemed to me expedient to avoid confusing the historical narrative, and to present a more satisfactory story of each separate part of the College buildings.

The authorities for the College history consist mainly of the MSS. (a vast quantity) still preserved in the College archives. Those which I have found most useful will be found described and classified in an Appendix. Of especial value for the historian in dealing with the site and buildings of the College during the first two centuries of its existence is the Calendar of Merton Records compiled by

Mr. W. H. Stevenson, Fellow of Exeter College. Without the help of this admirable piece of work I could scarcely have attempted this part of my history.

To Mr. Thomas Bowman, Fellow, Tutor, and Dean of the College, for ever ready advice and aid; to Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A., for kindly explaining to me some features of the College buildings; and to Bishop Hobhouse, sometime Fellow and Librarian, for information very kindly given, I owe no small thanks. Other particular obligations incurred by me in writing this history I acknowledge in their due place during its course.

Above all, to the Warden would I here render the most grateful acknowledgment, not only for his invariable and never-wearied help and encouragement ever since I began to work for this history, but also for his completing his kind service by reading the proofs and making many valuable suggestions thereon. His own book, the "Memorials of Merton College," is not the least of his very many gifts to the Society. And if I, for the purposes of my own history of the College, have chosen to form my judgment entirely independently of it, by inquiring for myself *de novo* into the facts and evidences before setting myself to tell a tale always dear to the Merton historian and thus not seldom attempted, it has been in the hope that this book may become, by no means a substitute for, but rather, if I may claim such a place for it, a companion to, the Warden's own most valuable contribution to the College history.

And yet it must seem to me that for one who not very long ago rejoiced to own his undergraduate allegiance to

another College, who has thus been as yet but a brief time member of Merton College, whose time to so remain is likely to be yet briefer, that for such an one to seek to write the Merton College history is not a little presumptuous. Only two excuses may I offer. It was in old time, when first his office was instituted, straitly enjoined upon the Merton Librarian as one of his most stringent duties to collect the College archives, and, if occasion arose, to publish the result of his researches into them. And, in the second place, the Fellow may feel in regard to his College:

> "Quel ch'io vi debbo, posso di parole
> Pagare in parte e d'opera d'inchiostro."

Yet I fear, if not the duty, yet at least the debt, remains for the most part undischarged.

BERNARD W. HENDERSON.

*Feb.* 4, 1899.

# CONTENTS

## PART I

### *HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE*


| CHAP. | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | THE FOUNDING (1264–1280) | 1 |
| II. | THE AGE OF GROWTH (1280–1483) | 35 |
| III. | THE TUDOR PERIOD AND THE REFORMATION (1483–1586) | 66 |
| IV. | THE GOLDEN AGE AND THE PURITAN MOVEMENT (1586–1660) | 94 |
| V. | PEACE AFTER STORM (1660–1898) | 139 |


## PART II

### *THE COLLEGE AND ITS BUILDINGS*


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. | MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE | 179 |
| II. | THE CHAPEL | 196 |
| III. | THE LIBRARY | 224 |
| IV. | HALL, QUADRANGLES, AND GARDEN | 243 |

CHAP. PAGE

V. CUSTOMS, FESTIVALS, AND ATHLETICS . . . 267

VI. "IN PIAM MEMORIAM" . . . . . 279

## APPENDICES

A.—AUTHORITIES . . . . . 283

B.—THE CLAIM TO PRIORITY . . . . . 285

C.—SOME DISPUTED MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE . . 287

D.—THE COLLEGE ARMS . . . . . 293

INDEX

# ILLUSTRATIONS


VIEW BY LOGGAN (1675) . . . . . *Frontispiece*

TOWER AND TRANSEPTS FROM THE GROVE . *Facing page* 34

WARDEN'S HOUSE AND EAST END OF THE HALL ,, 66

FELLOWS' QUADRANGLE FROM THE GARDEN . ,, 94

S. ALBAN HALL . . . . . ,, 138

MERTON COLLEGE FROM THE FIELDS . . ,, 178

INTERIOR OF CHAPEL (CHOIR) . . . . ,, 196

INTERIOR OF LIBRARY (WEST ROOM) . . ,, 224

"MOB QUAD" . . . . . ,, 256

MERTON COLLEGE: "SIGILLUM AD CAUSAS" . *Page* 294

## WARDENS OF MERTON COLLEGE

1264–1286. Peter de Abyngdon.
1286–1295. Richard Werblysdon.
1295–1299. John de la More.
1299–1328. John de Wantynge.
1328–1351. Robert Trenge.
1351–1375. William Durant.
1375–1387. John Bloxham.
1387–1398. John Wendover.
1398–1416. Edmund Beckynham.
1416–1417. Robert Gilbert.
1417–1422. Thomas Rodeborne.
1422–1438. Henry Abyndon.
1438–1455. Elias Holcote.
1455–1471. Henry Sever.
1471–1483. John Gygur.
1483–1507. Richard Fitzjames.
1507–1508. Thomas Harper.
1508–1522. Richard Rawlyns.
1522–1525. Rowland Phillips.
1525–1544. John Chambers.
1544–1545. Henry Tindall.
1545–1559. Thomas Raynolds.
1559–1562. James Gervaise.
1562–1569. John Man.
1569–1586. Thomas Bickley.
1586–1622. Henry Savile.

1622–1645. Nathaniel Brent.
1645–1646. William Harvey.
1646–1651. Nathaniel Brent (again).
1651–1660. Jonathan Goddard.
1660–1661. Edward Reynolds.
1661–1693. Thomas Clayton.
1693–1704. Richard Lydall.
1704–1709. Edmund Martin.
1709–1734. John Holland.
1734–1750. Robert Wyntle.
1750–1759. John Robinson.
1759–1790. Henry Barton.
1790–1810. Scrope Berdmore.
1810–1826. Peter Vaughan.
1826–1880. Robert Bullock Marsham.
1881. George Charles Brodrick.

The spelling of the names of many Wardens down to the seventeenth century presents a very great variety in many individual instances. In every such case I have chosen that form of the name for which the documentary evidence is earliest, preferring, *e.g.*, earlier documents to the "Catalogus Vetus," this to Twyne, and Twyne to Wood.

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# PART I

## *HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE*

## CHAPTER I

### THE FOUNDING (1264–1280)

"These things being performed, that will come to pass which the Apostle aims at, 'we shall have men faithful, such as shall be able to teach others,' and the Universitie shall breed such as shall be fit to serve the Church and Common-wealth. And indeed this was the end of the erection of schools and universities: 1, to bring forth men able to teach in the Church; 2, men fit to govern the Common-wealth. Of which we are now to speak."—(Lancelot Andrews: Bishop of Winchester.)

The thirteenth century saw the birth in England of new and great ideas. It was especially an age when practical wisdom was directed towards the achievement of great ends. But the champions of these, pursuing different aims, toiled at times in slow stress of conflict. None of these may claim honour more rightly than the foreigner-statesman, Simon de Montfort, and his English-born opponent, the statesman-ecclesiastic, Walter de Merton, sometime Chancellor of England and Bishop of Rochester. Ranked in the great struggle of the reign of Henry III. on opposite sides, they hand down their names together for the remembrance of

praise. The ever-changing fortunes of the one made possible the maturing of the other's aims. The system born of the one's invention supplied for all time those who should direct the machinery of free government, product of the other's toil.

Walter de Merton was born at Merton in Surrey, and educated at the Priory there before he went to Oxford to complete his studies. Hence came the name "de Merton" which he adopted and later bestowed upon his College. Advanced in 1254 to high honour in the kingdom, Chancellor in 1258, and again in 1260, he won influence with the King and his preferments were multiplied. Therewith came to him, as to every great mediæval ecclesiastic, the duty of making provision out of his riches and power for those of his kin who were poor and looked to him for aid.

In his ready recognition of this claim he devised a scheme, not, perhaps, new as at first conceived by him, but yet such that, as it developed with the increase of his riches and the growth of his ideas, it took finally a novel form in the foundation of Merton College in the University of Oxford.

It was already a familiar custom for a benefactor to maintain poor clerks in the schools at Oxford or elsewhere. This was a recognised good work, and also to the benefit of his own soul. Accordingly Walter de Merton set apart his estates of Malden, Farleigh, and Chessington in Surrey, to support eight of his young kinsmen "in scolis degentes"—*i.e.*, in study at a University. These estates were to be administered for their benefit by a Warden, "Custos," and they were to live under a rule, "Ordinatio," drawn up by him.

Of this earliest plan * the information is scanty, nor was it intended to be permanent. It merely established a principle of action, and was expanded soon after its devising.

In the year 1264, the long struggle between King and Barons ended in the defeat of the King. Walter de Merton, therefore, his partisan and loyal servant, no longer could hold office as Chancellor. In his leisure, and lack of public employment, he turned his thoughts to the development of this his earlier plan of benefaction. For it was in this year that he published the first code of statutes for his scholars.

### The Statutes of 1264.

By these statutes Walter de Merton founded on his estate at Malden, in Surrey, a House which he commanded should be called the "House of Scholars of Merton"—"Domus Scolarium de Merton." But his purpose in establishing this "Domus" was *not* that a band of scholars should assemble *there* for study.† It was founded "ad perpetuam sustentationem viginti scolarium in scolis degentium Oxon. vel alibi ubi studium vigere contigerit, et ad sustentationem duorum vel trium ministrorum altaris Christi in dicta Domo residentium."

That is, the main purpose of these gifts of estates in Surrey was, as before, the support of scholars in a University. By this new ordinance twenty scholars

* I follow Hobhouse rather than Kilner for the date of this document. It is clearly earlier than 1264. (*Cf.* K. MSS. iii. 14 *sq.*)

† As Wood ("History," pp. 3 and 4), and Hearne (O.H.S. viii. p. 107) wrongly assert. This quite wrong view dies very hard.

were to be thus maintained, preferably, though not of necessity, at Oxford. But their means of maintenance were to come from the Surrey estates. Here, therefore, a House was also to be founded, for the residence of those who controlled and worked the estates in the interests of the Oxford scholars as their "Procurators or Ministers." Here, too, should dwell two or three "Ministers of the Altar of Christ"—*i.e.*, priests of the founder's kin, and old men, it seems, who might thereby end their days in peace. And this House in the Surrey fields was called the House of Scholars of Merton because it belonged to the Scholars of Merton at Oxford as a corporate community, and was the centre of administration of estates which were their property, and whose revenues supported them "in scolis degentes."

Thus this first foundation fell into two halves. In Surrey was the Domus; in Oxford the Congregatio or Societas of the Scholars of Merton. In the House at Malden lived the Custos, Warden of the property; certain "Fratres" or Brethren and Stewards of the foundation, who should administer the property; and lastly the "Ministers of the Altar." And only once in the year were some of the Scholars allowed to visit the Domus. Every year, on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, eight or ten of the elder and discreeter scholars were to come in the name of the whole community to the House at Malden "in signum proprietatis et dominii," to inquire into the administration of the Warden and the condition of the estates. If the Warden had failed to obey the precept of the founder to "guard the property as it had been his own," the deputation of scholars might appeal against him to the

Bishop of Winchester. If for this, or any other reason, a new choice of Warden had to be made, the twelve senior of the twenty scholars were to choose a fit person with the advice of the Fratres of the House. The Bishop, Patron and Protector in all things of the scholars, was to ratify the choice. In every respect it was shown that the House in Surrey existed in the main for the support, and under the ultimate control, of the Community at Oxford. But as the object of this Community was study, and not the management of land, this last was taken out of their hands and given to trusted agents appointed by them. Even the yearly deputation was forbidden to stay in Surrey more than eight days. Nay, the Domus might be removed to Farleigh, or any other place, provided these rules were faithfully observed, and the scholars did not join themselves or their possessions to any other Society.

At Oxford, then, "vel alibi ubi studium vigere contigerit," twenty scholars were to be maintained by the revenues of the Surrey Domus. The "vel alibi" clause was a necessary provision in an age when no "studium generale" was ever very loath to transfer its seat from one place to another, and the mobility of Universities was at once their chief weapon of defence against real or fancied oppression, and a very well-known characteristic of the institution. Moreover, at this precise time the chief pursuit of Oxford scholars consisted in shooting at the King's lieges with arrows from the walls of Northampton as a form of practical protest against foreigners. The continued existence of the studium at Oxford therefore seemed somewhat doubtful, or, at least, studies could scarcely be said to flourish there, in the year 1264.

But though Walter de Merton wisely made provision

for establishing his scholars elsewhere if the need arose (and so the statutes of 1270 and 1274 also permit this), yet, if possible, his twenty scholars were to study in the schools at Oxford. From this purpose he never wavered, even though before the issue of his second code of statutes he had acquired land either in or very near Cambridge.* But at the time, and for many years after, there was but one great University in England, and that with a fame so rapidly growing that soon in European reputation it ranked second only to the University of Paris itself. At Oxford, therefore, so far as it was possible, should be founded and maintained his Community of Twenty Scholars.

The twenty were to be chosen, and any vacancies occurring in their number to be supplied, in the first place from such of the founder's kin as were "honesti et habiles ac proficere volentes." But whenever these were not enough in number, the ranks of the scholars were to be filled up from outside, with a preference for students belonging to the diocese of Winchester. They were to live together as a community, doubtless in a hall they hired for the purpose,† and to wear, as far as was possible, the same dress, "as a sign of unity and mutual affection." Each received 40*s.* annually from the hands of the Surrey Warden, or more if the estates allowed. And such maintenance was to last for life except in certain cases. For if any of the scholars joined any of the regular Orders and became a monk, if any refused to study earnestly or left the studium, if

* *Cf.* Twyne MSS. iii. p. 592, of which A. Wood ("History," p. 3) is—as regards this impossibility of Cambridge—a mere translation without any acknowledgment whatever.

† "In hospitio."

any were given a "beneficium uberius,"* if, finally, any were proved guilty of crime or grave disorder, these were to forfeit their maintenance and others be chosen into their places. But if any fell ill of an incurable disease and could not by other means earn a livelihood, these were to be maintained in the House at Surrey so long as they lived, rendering always such service to the Community as they might be able. Scholars in passing ill-health were to be cared for in the small "Hospital of S. John" established by the founder at Basingstoke.

The little Community at Oxford thus instituted was to live simply and frugally, without murmuring, satisfied with bread and beer and one course of flesh or fish a day. For the sake of hospitality, indeed, or in cases of necessity, they might supplement this fare, but never so as to lessen their power of maintaining the full number of twenty, or adding to it, whenever increase of wealth allowed. To this duty of increasing the numbers of the Community when possible, and in all things of looking rather to its future good than their own present comfort, all those who enjoyed Walter de Merton's benefactions, whether in Surrey or Oxford, were straitly bound.

When a vacancy occurred, the Community was to elect into the vacant place honourably and impartially the student most fitted thereto, aided or directed in case of need by the Chancellor or Rector of the University, or, if he refused to act within one month, by the Surrey Warden. But the founder's care extended beyond those of his kin who were of fit age to study in the University, and embraced those too young or too old for this. The Surrey House was to be a home

* *Cf.* Part ii. c. 1.

for such as had no other sufficient provision made for them. The old were to be maintained there, rendering ever such service to the House as they could. And the "little ones"—the "Parvuli"—who had either no parents or no means of sustenance were to be brought up there and trained in the first rudiments of learning by the Warden. Then when these too had reached a fit age, those who were of promise sufficient should pass on to Oxford as members there of the Community of Scholars of Merton. Thus provision not only of means, but also of those to enjoy them, was made by the founder for the permanence of that Community.

Lastly, once or twice every year the scholars were to meet together to commemorate their founder and other benefactors in divine service. They were ever to honour gratefully the Priory of Merton, "utpote hujus operis adjutricem." And if ever by the goodness of God any Scholar of the House won riches in after years, the founder charged him solemnly not to forget the Community, but assist it and defend it by every means in his power.

### Priority of Merton College.

Such was the first code of statutes given by Walter de Merton to his scholars. It constitutes a self-governing corporate secular community, with common property and the ultimate administration of it in common, with a common life and common aim of study, and a common rule. Though succeeding codes added to, and made important changes from, this the code of 1264, these essential features remain unchanged to this day. If a College means anything more than the common enjoyment of pension-doles, Merton College,

founded in Oxford in 1264, is the earliest of Oxford Colleges. Its statutes formed to a greater or less degree the model for imitation by all subsequent foundations in Oxford—at least till the founding of New College over a century later. And Hugh Balsham, Bishop of Ely, founder of the first Cambridge College, Peterhouse, in 1280 commanded that his new scholars should live "secundum regulam scolarium Oxonie qui de Merton cognominantur." *

Merton justly claims priority of existence over all other Colleges, because a "College" is justly defined, *not* as the mere recipients of a benefaction, *not* as the buildings in which such may live together, but as a self-governing corporate community with common rule, common life, common property, common end. In this, the only true sense of the word, Merton is the oldest surviving College in England, and dates back to 1264. Its buildings the Community acquired a few years later. Its final code of founder's statutes was issued in 1274, when the Surrey "Domus" was removed to Oxford. But whether it be in respect to self-government, or to statutes, or to buildings of its own where the Community lived together, in all these respects, above all in the true "marks" of a College, Merton College stands first and earliest, the example to the later Colleges of University and Balliol, in Oxford, and Peterhouse in Cambridge.†

### Acquisition of Site in Oxford.

Thus in 1264 Merton's Community of Scholars was established at Oxford. It was then a time of civil strife and confusion, a "Tempus Turbationis in regno

* Rashdall, ii. p. 560, Note 1.

† *Cf.* Appendix B.

Angliæ," as Walter de Merton afterwards described it. The ex-Chancellor of the King's faction could hardly view it otherwise.

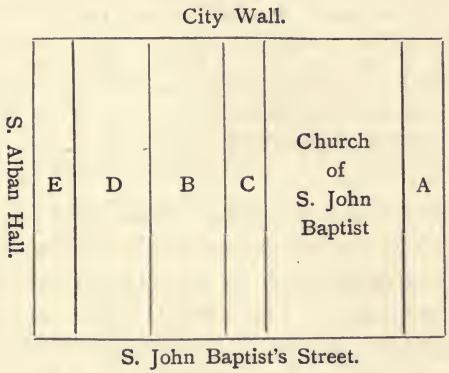
But peace was restored by Prince Edward's notable victory of Evesham on August 4, 1265, and with the final triumph of the King his adherent came back to influence and honour. Confiscated estates and ecclesiastical preferments were bestowed upon him. And as his wealth increased and peace seemed firmly secured, embracing Oxford in her sway, his thoughts turned constantly to his Community of Scholars. This too should reap advantage from his own increase. And others, in the highest station, came forward at his entreaty to aid him in the work, to the welfare of whose souls as well as of his own the prayers of the little body should be devoted.

The first great need was for a dwelling-place, owned and not hired by the scholars, with a church in which to pray, a common hall in which to work and eat, and rooms in which to sleep. Now at last it seemed safe to acquire such a permanent home in Oxford. The scholars had returned from Northampton and been forgiven by the King.

Therefore, from the year 1265 onwards, the founder set busily to work to acquire a fixed site in Oxford which should be the permanent home and property of his scholars. This site he found in the parish of S. John the Baptist in the south-east ward of the city, abutting on the city wall on the south and S. John Baptist's Street on the north (now Merton Street), and with the support of the King he acquired for his scholars by purchase or gift the land on which the College buildings now stand, together with the use and patron-

age of the parish church. What is now the College garden on the east and the site of Corpus Christi College on the west were not acquired to form respectively the Masters' and the Bachelors' gardens of Merton College until the next century. But the entire site of the present buildings of the College was obtained by November 25, 1268.

The order and method of acquisition will be clear from the following diagram.




A. Plot of Land, once built on, but vacant when bestowed, carrying with it the advowson of the Church of S. John and stretching to city wall. Granted to Walter de Merton on January 11, 1266, by Richard, Abbot of Reading Abbey. [Rec. No. 1.] Grant confirmed by King Henry, August 30, 1266, provided certain posterns be built in city wall for use of town in time of war. [Rec. 195.] Appropriation of Church to College on September 13, 1266, and confirmation by Richard, Bishop of Lincoln. [Rec. 206, 17.]

B. Houses of Jacob, son of Moses, Jew, of London, and Hannah his wife, formerly property of John Halegod. Sold February 28, 1267, to House of Scholars of Merton for 30 marks. But the present tenants, Anthony and Thomas Bek, to remain in possession for three years, paying 100s. rent for same. [Rec. 188.] In a somewhat remote sense, therefore, the Beks may be counted first "Commoners"

of Merton College. Anthony Bek is famous later as the fighting Bishop of Durham, 1283.

C. House belonging to Priory of S. Frideswide, formerly property of Henry Herprut. Granted by Robert the Prior to House of Scholars of Merton, *c.* 1267 (but later than B), at instance of the King. The scholars to offer in return every year one obol at S. Frideswide's shrine. [Rec. 189. *Cf.* Cart. Fridw. O.H.S. xxviii. No. 582, xvi. p. 308.] The entrance gateway and tower, built 1418, probably stand on this site.

D. House of Robert of Flixthorpe, formerly property of Roger Herlewyne, and sold by Christina his daughter to the said Robert. Granted by him November 25, 1268, to the House of Scholars of Merton. [Rec. 186, 187, and Liber Ruber, fol. 13 *d.*]

E. Nun Hall, property, as was S. Alban Hall, of Abbess and Nuns of Littlemore, but rented as a house for the "Parvuli" within a few years of the foundation of College, bet. 1274–8. Annexed to S. Alban Hall soon after 1461. [Wood, "City of Oxford," i. 177, 178, and "History," i. pp. 654 *sqq.*]

That the property B, C, D reached, as did A, to the city wall is almost certain. *Cf.* Wood, *loc. cit.* p. 177, Note 3, by A. Clark.

Thus, by the end of 1268 the Scholars of Merton had acquired the entire present site of the College buildings. True, very little remains of any that the founder himself may have seen. The antique stone carving over the College gate, the great north door of the vestibule of the hall with its fantastic tracery of iron, perhaps the Treasury and Outer Sacristy, these seem relics of the earliest past. But Chapel, Hall, Library, Quadrangles, are later than the founder.* Yet the College owes, if not the actual buildings, yet very much of their order and arrangement to the first years of its life. As essential features of Collegiate buildings then existed, it seems, on the present site a common refectory and kitchen, common sleeping-chambers, and a church for divine service. Herein again Merton College became the model for later foundations. Its first buildings

* See at length in Part II.

were kept separate, "disposed in an unconnected manner about a quadrangular court after the fashion of the outer curia of a monastery."* The regular quadrangular disposition of College buildings was introduced in 1379 by William of Wykeham. But while the majority of earlier Colleges rebuilt their courts in harmony with the popular custom, the somewhat disconnected and open irregular appearance of the front quadrangle of Merton College to-day (and it is well-nigh unique in these respects) is truly reminiscent of the plans and buildings of its founder in the thirteenth century.

Besides the site and first buildings of the College in Oxford, Walter de Merton in these same years gathered in many other gifts of lands and advowsons for his small community. In September 1266 the King gave it the Rectory of S. Peter's-in-the-East, in Oxford, with its chapels of S. Cross (Holywell) and Wolvercote.† From his brother Richard, King of the Romans, it received Horspath in 1268; from the Princes Edward and Edmund, in 1267, Elham in Kent and Emildon in Northumberland. The Priory of Stone gave Wolford in 1266; in 1268 the church (a moiety) and estates at Gamlingay in Cambridgeshire were granted by the Bishop of Ely and William de Leycestre respectively.‡ Other donors bestowed the advowsons of Ponteland and Dodington in Northumberland (1268), Stratton in

* Willis and Clark, iii. 249–251.

† The College has been from its earliest years Lord of the Manor of Holywell. This involved the right of execution of offenders. So a certain William condemned for robbery was hanged December 8, 1337. *Cf.* Wood, "City of Oxford," p. 382 N. Rogers's "Prices," ii. 666.

‡ For these gifts, *cf.* Statutes of 1270 and Rec. No. 3150.

Wilts (1269), Lapworth in Warwickshire. The manors of Cuxham, Ibston, and Chetindon in Oxon. and Bucks, Stillington and Seton Carew in Northumberland, Kibworth in Leicestershire, and lands at Leatherhead in Surrey, all these and others were acquired for Walter de Merton's foundation in the years, it seems, between the first two codes of statutes. With good reason did Walter de Merton found his College "for the weal of my own soul and for the souls of the King of England and his brother Richard, King of the Romans, of their predecessors and heirs, and of my parents and all my benefactors." Never did College enjoy the sunshine of royal favour and the generosity of benefactors more fully than the little foundation of Merton in Oxford in its early years.*

A College founded in times of civil strife might well need strengthening and confirmation in times of peace. The new wealth too meant increased opportunities of use. Moreover, the statutes of 1264 had left much undetermined, and in particular the nature of the studies to which the scholars of Merton were to devote themselves. And the possession of a home of their own must involve rules for life and discipline within it.

### The Statutes of 1270.

Therefore, in 1270, Walter de Merton published his second code of statutes for his foundation. Much remained unaltered. Still there was the Domus at Malden with its Custos, now elected by the thirteen senior scholars with advice of the Fratres;. the Fratres

* *Cf.* October, 1271 (Rec. 88), the royal grant of immunity from suits of the County, Hundred, Wapentake, and other courts.

seu Oeconomi; the Ministers of the Altar (now described as three or four); and as many as fifteen "Parvuli" with their prospect of succession to Oxford, if there were so many in need. Still at Oxford existed the Congregation of the Scholars, whence a deputation of seniors visited the Surrey House for supreme administrative and audit purposes every year in July. The principles of common life and property were the same. Various changes and additions, however, were made.

The number of scholars was no longer fixed at twenty. Any not of the founder's kin might be elected from any diocese wherein the College had property. And, therefore, up to quite recent years a Fellow when elected was described in the College records by his diocese, not by his former College or birthplace.

But it is chiefly in two directions that the new statutes mark an advance on those of 1264—viz., in the rule of studies, repeated *verbatim* in the statutes of 1274, and the enforcement of discipline and good order.

All the scholars of Walter de Merton's foundation were bound, as soon as the first "rudimenta puerilia" were learned, to study Arts and Philosophy, "donec laudabiliter in eisdem perfecerint ad profectum."

Then, and not till then, the great majority were to go on to the study of Theology. But four or five whom the Warden and their fellows knew to be "modest, humble, and honourable, full of zeal for God and for souls," might be allowed to study Canon Law "pro utilitate ecclesiastici regiminis." As a means to this end the Warden might allow them to attend lectures in Civil Law for a time. But "inasmuch," wrote our founder, "as a knowledge of Arts and Philosophy is of very great use to Theologians, the majority of the

students of the said House are always to study these, attending or giving lectures according to their respective proficiency." The end and crown of study to the great majority of Merton scholars was Theology. It was to *follow* a course of Arts and Philosophy. Is it a benefit either to the theologian or to the Church that to-day we have so largely forgotten or disregarded this early rule and reasoning?

One of the scholars, however, was to devote himself completely to the study and teaching of Latin Grammar.* For there was heresy in Oxford scholarship as well as in Oxford scholasticism. And, in view of the use of Latin on every possible occasion in a mediæval University, it was characteristic of the foresight of Walter de Merton to provide his scholars with a "Grammaticus." This officer was to ensure the younger scholars a sound grounding in the language, and to him even the elder might "without blushing" resort in any need.

This statute of 1270 was repeated in the 1274 code, and the "Grammar Lecturer" remained an institution of the College at least till 1587, when his stipend was £3 10*s.* a year. Soon after this the office fell into abeyance. But it was revived in May 1635 under the following special circumstances. There was then one Henry Jacob, a Fellow, who had been continually absent from the College, and his fellowship had been therefore declared void. At Archbishop Laud's suggestion, however, he was re-instated to act as "Grammaticus," the Archbishop discovering such an

* That "Idioma regulare" here means not English, but Latin, is, I think, despite Boase and Percival, certain, as by the 1270 statutes a scholar must talk during study "non aliter quam idiomate regulari."

office should by the founder's statutes exist in the College. Anthony Wood says somewhat cruelly that Jacob, "not having so much logick and philosophy to carry him through the severe exercises of that society, the warden and fellows tacitly assigned him philological lecturer." * As, however, he was bound to lecture every Thursday in term time between 1 and 2 P.M. for at least three quarters of an hour in Latin on philology, which included Greek, Roman, and Oriental antiquities, his position can scarcely have been a sinecure.† The office is mentioned again in 1737.

The statutes of 1270 not only directed the studies of the scholars at Oxford: they further laid down strict rules of discipline. At meals all scholars were to keep silence save one, who was to read aloud some edifying work. In their rooms and at study all noisy talking was forbidden. If a student had need to talk, he must use Latin.‡ In every room one "Socius" older and wiser than the rest was to act as "Præpositus," control the manners and studies of the rest, and report on the same to the Warden, or to the whole body of Præpositi, or to the whole "Congregatio" of scholars. To every twenty scholars was chosen a monitor—Vicenarius—for disciplinary purposes, and finally over the whole society in Oxford a "Custos interior, in ipsa congregatione studentium pro cura et regimine atque aliis necessitatibus et negotiis studentium prædictorum." A like under-Custos was appointed to help the Warden in the House

* This statement is thoroughly characteristic of A. Wood. He has the date wrong (1636), the period of disuse wrong (100 years), and makes no mention of the Archbishop or of the lecturer's duties. *Cf.* "Athenæ," iii. 329, 330.

† Coll. Reg. *Cf.* Laud's "Injunctions," No. 23.

‡ See note on p. 16.

at Malden. It was an elaborate system of disciplinary checks, probably not over-elaborated in view of the wild turbulence of the student-life of the time. But doubtless the common responsibilities and identical interests in peace and good government shared by all members of the self-governing community, which now was confined within the walls of a College their possession and their pride, did more to promote the harmony to which their founder was ever exhorting them than any such system. All were alike guardians of their then not very ancient walls.* And the founder removed one source of trouble, alike from the Oxford congregation and the Surrey House, in sternly banishing all women from the precincts.

"Et ne in dicta domo vel societate prædicta pestis pullulet quæ per carnis illecebras totiens vexat incautos, singula prædictæ Domus ministeria ad minus infra septa curiæ, necnon et alibi quatenus alibi fieri poterit, perpetuis temporibus fiant per mares."

A note appended to these statutes provides for the maintenance of three chaplains to celebrate masses for the souls of benefactors. Though the scholars were to attend divine service "when they had leisure," they were, after all, a secular foundation for purposes of study, and the saying of mass was not their main end, clerics though, of course, they were. It also provides similarly for a new class of poor students, "scholares secundarii," twelve in number, to receive each sixpence a week from Michaelmas to Midsummer, and live with the rest at Oxford. Thus they are clearly distinguished from the "Parvuli."† Neither provision seems to have been

* To use a phrase familiar to the present generation of Mertonians.

† Rashdall (ii. p. 486) identifies them wrongly, I think. For one thing, the numbers prescribed in either case are different.

carried into effect. But this idea of secondary scholars is interesting as being a foreshadowing of the distinction which grew up much later between "Fellows" and "Scholars" as a class. Probably, too, it was from this that Wyllyot a century later derived his idea of the institution of a separate class of "Portionistæ," the Merton "Postmasters" of to-day.

### The Final Code of Statutes, 1274.*

But one more notable change, and the founder's task is completed.

So long as the estates of the Community lay in Surrey only, it was but reasonable that in the founder's scheme there should be one "House of Trust and Maintenance at Malden," and one "House of Literature at Oxford."† But now the property of the Society was distributed over all parts of England, by wise provision of the founder. It could therefore be administered as well from Oxford as from Surrey. This concentration too would have all the advantage of simplifying what was now a needlessly complicated system of administration, and led, too, to other inconveniences. How, for instance, could the Warden be the chief disciplinary officer, as the statutes of 1270 required, and yet remain in Surrey, without an endless worry of communication and appeal? And by this time the Society was settling down quietly in its buildings in Oxford. Everything, therefore, sug-

* These statutes of 1274, 42 chapters, are translated in full in the present Warden's "Memorials of Merton College," pp. 317–340. I pass briefly over them here partly for this reason, and also because so much in them is a repetition of the earlier codes. What is new is mainly an elaboration of the new administrative system, and I have space only for a brief summary of this.

† Kilner.

gested to Walter de Merton the desirability of that veritable "synœcism" which made finally of Merton College, as of any Greek city, a complete and satisfying unity.

Chancellor again on King Henry's death in 1272, and practically Regent of the Kingdom till Edward's return from the Crusades on August 2, 1274, no sooner, it seems, did Walter de Merton then resign the seals of office than he set himself in this same month to finish his work at Oxford, before finally taking up the burden of episcopal duties at Rochester in October of this same year. For it was in August of this year that he published the last code of statutes for his foundation. In it he commands that henceforth and for ever there shall be one home and one place of habitation for his House of Scholars of Merton, and that at Oxford.*

"Ego Walterus de Merton, clericus, illustris domini regis Angliæ quondam Cancellarius, de summi rerum et bonorum Opificis bonitate confisus, Ejusdem gratiæ Qui vota hominum pro sua voluntate ad bonum disponit et dirigit fideliter innisus, animique revolutione sæpe sollicitus si quid sui nominis honori retribuam pro his quæ mihi in hac vita habundanter retribuit, Domum quam Scolarium de Merton intitulari seu nuncupari volui et mandavi . . . . nunc pace Angliæ reformata ac pristina Turbatione sedata, animi stabilitate perpetua approbo, stabilio, et confirmo, Locumque sibi habitationis et domum Oxoniæ, ubi Universitas viget studentium, in meo territorio proprio ecclesiæ S^ti. Johannis contermino, concedo et assigno."

A necessary result of the amalgamation at Oxford was the closer definition of the system of College government and administration. And the scheme for this drawn up by the founder in 1274 lasted with

* Subject, as in 1270, to the possibility of migration thence if ever the need should arise.

scarcely any radical changes down to the era of Parliamentary Commissions in the present century.

At the head of the whole Society stood the Warden, "vir in spiritualibus et temporalibus circumspectus," with an annual stipend of fifty marks, two post-horses, and other extras. The new rule for the election of a new Warden was that seven of the elder scholars, after making a careful inquiry of all their number whether any knew of any man either of the House or from outside fit for the office, should then select three names to be presented to the Visitor, and the Visitor should then present one of these to the office. This rule was followed down to the last election, *i.e.*, so long as it remained in the statutes. It was also held that the Visitor must choose the first of the names presented, and neglect by external authorities either of the statute or of this belief usually led to disturbances.

Under the Warden were ranked various officers of the Society.

The Vice-Custos, or Sub-Warden, was, whenever the Warden was absent, to take his place, and otherwise assist him in his duties. Hence he must be "conversatione et moribus approbatus." The financial administration of the College was placed in the hands of "tres idonei et discreti de scolaribus," later called Bursars, together with the Warden and Sub-Warden. The College estates were to be managed by the "œconomi seu ballivi," who, if found useful and honest, should receive a perpetuity in the House and the name of "Fratres." Once every year all were called together into the presence of Warden, Sub-Warden, and eight or ten of the older scholars, to render up their keys and give an account of their stewardship. And once every

year, after harvesting, the Warden was to make a progress round all the College estates, and report on their condition and value to the Sub-Warden and scholars.

The "Fratres" were the only element in the Surrey House that did not migrate in 1274 to Oxford. With the Warden came the three or four Ministers of the Altar, later called Chaplains, to conduct divine service. As previously distinguished from scholars, therefore for many years afterwards they were not "Fellows" of the House. And with him came thirteen "Little Ones," who were lodged by the College in Nun Hall.

As in 1270, no limit was to be put on the number of the "Scholars." It was to increase as the revenues of the House increased. Unless special cause of delay in this were shown, as, *e.g.*, "the need for a subsidy to the Holy Land," "a burdensome debt," "the ransom of the prince or a prelate," or "a murrain among the flocks and herds," any opposition among the scholars, whether on the part of the Warden or any other scholar, to such an increase was to be severely reprimanded. Persistent opposition involved deprivation.

New scholars were to be chosen by the Warden and thirteen senior scholars. These thirteen seniors had been the electorate in 1270 for the choice of a Warden, and if they could not agree among themselves at an election, the Sub-Warden was then directed to deprive them of food, and starve them into unanimity. This business-like rule was dropped in 1274. The Warden and any six could carry the day against the other seven. It was clearly more important, by hook or by crook, to be unanimous in the choice of a new Warden than in that of a new scholar. It would have been

well, perhaps, in after years if the board of seven which met to nominate for the Wardenship had also at times been starved into common consent. Now for the first time newly-elected scholars were bound to a year of probation, wherein the Society tested their fitness. Discipline was to be enforced as strictly as by the rule of 1270; but the "one in twenty" had proved not quite able to cope with the unruly spirits of the other nineteen. The new statute directed the choice of one in ten for such disciplinary purposes. Thus originates the "Decanus," the "Dean" of Merton, which office continues.

Lastly, two earlier rules were strictly re-inforced. The first was a privilege—viz., the all-important right of legislation. In 1270 the Warden and seniors of the Society were given the right of framing new observances, which were to be faithfully observed by the whole Society. In 1274 this rule is repeated, the power of making new statutes being given to the Warden and eight or ten seniors. And thrice every year was to be held a general chapter or "scrutiny" of all the scholars, to last eight days on each occasion, when a careful inquiry into the life and diligence of every scholar was to be instituted.

Secondly, the strictest possible charge binding all on oath never to proceed in a court of law, nor take any judicial proceedings of any kind, against the Society, if expelled from it, is found in the 1274 statutes, repeated with emphasis from the earlier codes. The goods of the House were not to be wasted in idle suits. Far above all personal claims or grievances or comforts rose the one great claim of the Community to loyalty, service, and far-sighted affection on the part

of each individual member. And this spirit of our founder's statutes no Parliamentary legislation can ever render obsolete.

### Finishing Touches.

In Lent 1276 Archbishop Kilwardby visited the College. This was the first of a long series of Archiepiscopal Visitations. For the Visitor and Patron of the College was no longer the Bishop of Winchester, but the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose authority as Visitor, though never expressly stated in the statutes, remained unquestioned till the days of Archbishop Parker's quarrel with the College.* The Visitation of 1276 resulted in a series of ordinances to more closely interpret the statutes. They were fully approved by Walter de Merton, bear his seal, and served as an appendix to the statutes of 1274. The Archbishop therein nominated a Sub-Warden, three Deans, and three Bursars, regulated the distribution of stipends and the keeping of the records and books of the Society, and provided for the due control by the Community of the degrees of its Masters of Arts, binding these also to lecture for three years from their "inception," or taking of that degree.† The foundation of the College was solemnly confirmed by the Bishop of Lincoln on April 30, 1276, by the Archbishop on May 2, 1276, and on July 29, 1279, by his successsor, Archbishop Peckham, and eleven Bishops sitting in conference at

* The Bishop of Lincoln showed a disposition to visit the College in 1314, but was promptly checked by the Archbishop (Reg. Raynold. fol. 56 a).

† *Cf.* Kilner, MSS. i. 42, 43; Wood, "Annals," App. p. 202; Hobhouse, pp. 39, 40, and the actual text of the injunctions in Merton archives.

Reading.* Finally it received the solemn confirmation of Pope Nicholas III. at Rome on April 11, 1280.†

Before this, on October 27, 1277, Walter de Merton had died. He was buried in his cathedral at Rochester. Twice the College has rebuilt his tomb: in 1598, with splendour; in 1849, restoring its impressive primitive simplicity. But the more lasting monument is his College at Oxford, and its six and a half centuries of life. Much of his work still survives. True, the community has grown in numbers: to the class of "scholars" were added the new classes of "Portionistæ" in 1380 and Commoners in 1497. The Sub-Warden persists. The three Deans became two in 1858, and the two were merged with the office of Principal of the Postmasters (itself dating from 1380) in 1882. The three Bursars became two in 1848, and so remain. The three Chaplains became two in 1565, and so remain. The annual progress round the College estates of the Warden, assisted by one or more Bursars, lasted till some fifty years ago. The Librarianship was made a separate office in 1658. The three annual "scrutinies" lasted till 1839, and are represented to-day by the "stated general meetings," though the business here transacted is not mainly an inquiry into the morals and diligence of each of the members. The ceremony of the "giving up of the keys" once a year lingers on, but applies now not to external bailiffs, but to the servants of the Oxford Community, and it is shorn of impressiveness when what was once the inquisitorial

* *Cf.* Rec. 235, 237, 239.

† Liber Ruber, fol. 12 A, 12 B. Twyne MSS. xxii. p. 322, who ascribes the Bull to Nicholas IV. and 1290—as Nicholas III. was not Pope for the whole year 1280. But Nicholas III. did not die till August 22, 1280.

board of Warden, Sub-Warden, and seniors is represented by the Sub-Warden sitting in solitary state in hall.

Yet, however many and great the changes, in essentials Merton College in 1898 preserves intact the institutions given to and the charge laid upon the House of Scholars of Merton in 1264. To sketch, however faintly, the influence of Walter de Merton's foundation upon all English University life from that day to this would form so great a part of the history of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge that here we can but admire afar off. For in that foundation was for the first time expressed the only true idea of a College. Once expressed, it has never been forgotten. After its pattern was modelled the work of later founders. And the collegiate system has revolutionised the course of University life in England. To individual study is added common life, to private aims the idea of a common good. The individual is called to other activities besides those for his own sole gain. Diversities of thought and training, of taste, ability, strength, and character, brought into daily contact, bound fast together by ties of common interest, give birth to sympathy, broaden thought, and force inquiry, that haply in the issue may be formed that reasoned conviction and knowledge, that power of independent thought, to produce which is the great primary aim of our English University education. And yet but a tithe of the tale is told of the debt of the country to its Chancellor of old time for his founding his House of Scholars of Merton.

### The Founder's Motives.

These are the effects. But what were the chief motives which inspired Walter de Merton to create his

College? Three become at once apparent. To make provision for his kin and his soul's welfare were ends to be striven after by every Churchman of the thirteenth century. But both could be won by cheaper and less troublous means than by the founding and endowing of a College. And the great and constant care the Merton founder bestowed on his House of Scholars, as well as the regulations by which he sought to guide its daily life, prove the existence in his mind of at least this third motive also—viz., the advancement of learning, and preferably in the University of Oxford. But here misconceptions lie in wait for us on every side.

The great monastic Orders of friars, the "regulars" among the clergy, had by 1264 recently settled at Oxford. First, as was natural, had come the Dominicans. The founder of the Order which should extirpate all heresy by force of learning and argument, and not by irrational enthusiasm, early directed his adherents and disciples to the seats of learning in Europe. Thus, in August 1221, a little band of thirteen monks settled at Oxford in S. Edward's parish, moving soon thence to the Jewry. Hard after them came the Franciscan settlement in 1224. The Black friars and the Grey friars were followed by the White friars, the Carmelites, in 1254, and the Penitentiarian friars in 1262. Before the century ended came others. Oxford was invaded by the friars. Did the University assimilate her invaders?

The first two Orders won great and speedy success among the students, gaining influence and numerous recruits. "Our Lord gives me hopes of making a good capture in the University of Oxford where I now am," wrote Jordan, Master of the whole Order, to his fellow

Dominicans at Bologna as early as 1229. And, indeed, few would be more ready to listen to such claims as Dominic's on self-surrender, service, study, and devotion than the young Oxonian. In like manner, Roger Bacon and Duns Scotus were Franciscan monks at Oxford.

Indeed, the "regulars" tended to monopolise the serious learning of the University, and the vast mass of secular clergy suffered in esteem and education. Inasmuch too as the "rule" of the friars was often out of harmony with the regulations of the University, there was often great friction between the two. At Paris, the war raged fiercely from 1250 onwards. At Oxford the University was fighting the friars, chiefly the Dominicans, for the entire last half of the thirteenth century and beyond, with ever-varying fortunes, and the fight was at times literal as well as metaphorical. How could the rushing zeal of Dominic or Francis brook the hindrances of University decrees and regulations? "Quasi torrente ch'alta vena preme" it beat upon the resistance. How could the University avoid dislike and suspicion of these "captures"?

"Wee might blazon the subtile dealings of these men in their underminding of the Universitye's priviledges, in their crafty proceedings to procure riches from their admirers by the continuall buzzing in their eares of upstart notions in philosophy and divinity, in their inticing young schollers to their profession . . . as also their particular juglings to cozen the ignorant and lay people."*

Now in all this warfare, as usually happens, learning suffered, and more particularly that of the secular theologian, of the abler of the "clerks." As the war raged alike at Paris and at Oxford, so almost simultaneously in both Universities, at the height of the

* A. Wood.

struggle, a man was found to create a College devoted to the maintenance and the education of the *secular* theologian. In 1257 Robert de Sorbonne established his College at Paris for sixteen students of theology who were secular clerks. In 1264 Walter de Merton founded at Oxford his College for twenty students of theology or canon law (as in 1270 he ordained), who not only were not friars or monks, but who *ipso facto* forfeited their claim to his bounty if they entered any of the regular Orders. The aims of the two founders were clearly similar.

The third motive, therefore, of the founder of Merton College was the advancement of learning of the secular theologian. Not that we may suppose, as some have done, that hē was actuated therein by motives of actual hostility to the mendicant orders. On the contrary, he was a friend of the famous Franciscan, Adam Marsh, and in his will he bequeathed moneys to the Franciscans and Dominicans in Oxford and elsewhere.* And from monastic institutions he doubtless borrowed the ideas of a common life and rule. But as at Paris the College of Sorbonne "was absolutely needed if the class of secular theologians was to be kept from entire extinction,"† so at Oxford such learning was imperilled, and Walter de Merton became its champion. If one of the scholars of the House of Merton took the vows of any Order, clearly the Order was bound to maintain him, and there was every reason against his continuing to enjoy the benefaction intended for other ends. Walter de Merton founded his College not out of hostility to the friars, but to assist a cause which their coming had tended to

* *Cf.* Hobhouse, p. 45. Little, O.H.S. xx. pp. 9 and 102.

† Rashdall, i. p. 489.

depress.* His third object was the advancement of learning, of study.

But study is not an end-in-itself. Nor has it ever been, nor is it to-day, the sole, even the chief, function of a University to produce new knowledge. Walter de Merton's scholars were to study, not so much to discover new knowledge, as to acquire knowledge new to them. His College was to train the thought, mature the judgment, quicken the reason of its students. To this end were the study and the common life. To him it seems such "training," rather than research, was the chief service of a University to the nation.

And this fact illuminates and is illuminated by the final purpose of the founder of the first English College. Walter de Merton's final purpose in founding his College for the education and training of his young kinsmen and others, an education which should culminate in theology, was that the best of them should be equipped, after such study was ended, to go forth into the world for service in Church and State. Thus in 1264 he founded his College "in profectum ecclesiæ Sanctæ Dei"; in 1270, "ecclesiæ sacrosanctæ profectum ex meis laboribus augere cupiens et exoptans"; in 1274, "sollicitus si quid Sui Nominis honori retribuam pro his quæ mihi in hac vita habundanter retribuit Domum . . fundavi." In 1279, just after the founder's death, Archbishop Peckham wrote to the College that it had been instituted "in remedium studii pereuntis" (a significant allusion to the state of the University at the time), "quare Christo domino . . . . supplicamus ut in scholasticis aciebus maneatis ordinati in vicem et ad ducem." This was the duty of the community in

* *Cf.* Boase, O.H.S. xxvii. pp. i.–iii.

Oxford, to be of good service "in scholasticis aciebus." But while many of the students were to spend their lives thus,* to what purpose were so many advowsons carefully acquired by the founder if not that some should do service to the Church in the outside world? Again, the definite permission was given in 1270 and repeated in 1274, that five or six, and clearly the most able, of the little company might study canon law "pro utilitate ecclesiastici regiminis." For the statesmen of the time with scarcely an exception were ecclesiastics, and no study was then more needful for those to be of service in the State than this. And just because it was the road to preferment and high honour and responsibility, those of Merton's foundation to read it should be "modesti, humiles, et honesti." Even of the rest, the statutes of 1270 command that

"those older and graver members of the Society on whom Almighty God hath bestowed the grace of preaching shall be directed to the Parishes which shall be assigned to them as often as it may conveniently so chance, and there they shall preach the word of God with all diligence and humility, and shall strive with such strength as is theirs to assist their parishioners and their misdoings with healthy counsel in such matters chiefly as pertain to their salvation."

It is true that this clause does not appear in the code

* I cannot agree with Mr. Rashdall when he says, "The life-fellow was a being quite undreamed of by any early College-Founder" (ii p. 486). That some of the scholars of Merton were expected to remain such for life is, I think, certain. Unless for any of the causes already stated "sustentationem plene et integre habeant scolares dum bene et honeste se habuerint." This rule of 1264 is repeated in 1270 and 1274 in slightly different language. Still clearer is the general Burial Clause in 1270—repeated in 1274—"Socii quoque dictæ congregationis sicuti usque ad vitæ exterminium socii fuerint in convictu, sic et ubi simul egerint, cum suis sociis atque confratribus ecclesiasticam in sua morte habeant sepulturam." Only *some* of the Merton scholars were to go out into the world.

of 1274, but none the less that Walter de Merton still intended many of his scholars to become parish priests after study at Oxford is shown by his repeated injunction that any "uberius beneficium" disqualifies for the retention of a scholar's place, and by the practice of Mertonians for all succeeding centuries to this day to leave Oxford, their course finished, for this service. That it was, too, his intention to advance the interests of the Church is expressly stated in the royal and episcopal charters of confirmation granted his foundation then and in after years. The Archbishop and Bishops at Reading in 1279 approve his works of charity and piety "quæ Ecclesiæ dei exaltationem respiciunt et honorem."* Pope Nicholas in 1280 confirms the foundation willingly "quod per viros litterarum scientia redimitos fides catholica robur suscipit et ecclesia ipsa multipliciter decoratur."† Bishop Beaumont, 1330, testifies "quod totam Ecclesiam Anglicanam operibus et doctrinis perlustravit." And finally in his Charter of August 15, 1444, King Henry VI. relieves the College from royal requisitions and taxes on the same grounds:

"Know ye that We, maturely considering that many supporters of Our Holy Church have been brought up in the House of Scholars of Merton in Oxford, eminent for all kinds of knowledge and virtue, and for enlightening the Christian world with their celebrated writings and publications, . . . and being desirous to reach out Our assistance to so illustrious a body, which hath been in its members so great an ornament to sound religion, and whose statutes and customs and pious demeanour of the fellows shine, as the resemblance of the parent in its progeny, in other renowned Colleges since founded in either University within Our realm, . . . We therefore of Our special grace and free goodwill do give and confirm . . . exemption from all aids, taxes, &c. &c."‡

* *Loc. cit. sup.*, pp. 24–25. † Kilner, p. 23.

‡ Cal. Rec. No. 74. Kilner's translation, MSS. ii. 205–210. Also ap. Twyne, iii. p. 588.

It is thus evident that one of Walter de Merton's motives was the advancement of the Church in England, to which end he directed the studies of his scholars to Theology and Canon Law. It is of course true, as regards this injunction, that the Church was then well-nigh the only avenue of approach to all the learned professions and continued so to be for many years.* It does not, however, appear that the founder intended his scholars' training in Theology to be a mere preliminary to any profession. For in 1284 Archbishop Peckham expressly forbade the study of Medicine at Merton as a breach of the founder's statutes and intentions as proved by custom.

Not then to qualify his scholars for any profession, and not to produce a number of "shrewd and active men trained to business,"† did Walter de Merton found his House. Doubtless both results have ever since largely obtained. But his final motives reached beyond these aims. To provide for his kin and the safety of his soul; to encourage study and assist a class of students "threatened with extinction"; to maintain their studies; to train students in Arts and Philosophy that they might be able to go forwards to Theology, the crowning science—these were all real and primary aims. But through them all Walter de Merton seems to have fixed his eyes on an aim beyond. The web of all his statesmanlike provisions and actions seems as if shot through with this other thread. By his foundation should be then and in after years main-

* *E.g.*, the great physician John Chambers, Warden of the College, 1525–1544, was in holy orders, Canon of Windsor, and Dean of King's Chapel, Westminster.

† Rogers ("Hist. Prices," i. 22, 23) surely emphasises this too much. An undoubted effect is none the less no *vera causa*.

tained a constant succession of students of learning and sober life, to be sent later from the walls of his College of Merton into the outer world, there to do good service in Church and State. "Service" is the word which may best characterise the aim of his institutions—service of each inside to the common good of their College, service of those who went forth from it to the Church and Realm of England. Such was then the test of the training and the loyalty of each Mertonian.

[*Note.*—AUTHORITIES FOR CHAPTER I.—The main authorities are the actual texts of statutes and ordinances and the documents in the Merton archives—*vide* references in the notes. These have been used also by the following, whom I have also consulted: *Twyne* MSS. iii. 583–605, xxii. 320, 322, and his "Antiq. Oxon. Apol."; *Wood*, "City," i. 176–179, ii. 71–73; "History," pp. 3, 4; "Annals," 76, 92, 272; *Hearne*, O.H.S. viii. 107, 108; *Kilner*, MSS. iii. 14–32, and notes to "Pyth. School" *passim; Hobhouse*, "Life of Walter de Merton."

There are two popular errors: (*a*) that the *scholars* were first settled in Surrey, and (*b*) that the community removed to Oxford in 1267. The second certainly is due to Twyne: so, perhaps, is the first. Wood translated Twyne (without acknowledgment) and added to him from his own study of the Merton archives. Hearne reproduced Wood.

There is no doubt whatever that, as Kilner first showed, these are errors. In my account I follow him and Hobhouse without the smallest hesitation, as do Willis and Clark, pp. xxxi–xxxiii.; so Chalmers, i. 5, 6. None can read the statutes carefully without discovering the first error. The second is based on a copy of the statutes of 1274 which bears the date 1267. That this date is an error, probably for 1277, the document itself bears proof. For which, *cf.* H. Bradshaw's note in Willis and Clark, p. xxxii. and Hobhouse, p. 32.

On the importance of Walter de Merton's scheme, Messrs. Rashdall (ii. 481–490), Boase (O.H.S. xxvii. p. 1–3), Shadwell (Clark, "Colleges," 87–88), and Macleane (O.H.S. xxxiii. p. 31) have written suggestively.

The best piece of work on the subject is undoubtedly Bishop Hobhouse's treatise, to which I owe much.]

TOWER AND TRANSEPTS, FROM THE GROVE

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

# CHAPTER II

## THE AGE OF GROWTH (1280–1483)

Spite of the many injunctions of the founder, the early years of the Society were not altogether years of obedience and harmony. The rule and discipline, the monastic simplicity of life, were irksome. Comfort was possible if oaths were disregarded. Nor in the beginnings of the corporate life can the sense of individual responsibility to the Community be so strong as when there rests on the present a duty not only of provision for the future but also of fidelity to the past.

Thus it befell that the company of Merton scholars, now forty in number, as early as 1284 required exhortation and reproof. Their Visitor, Archbishop Peckham, had need to issue on August 31 from Lambeth a series of injunctions for the closer obedience of the statutes. The scholars had increased their old allowances of 50*s.*; neglected divine service (it being voluntary), and the rule of silence at meals. Yet "to loose from control a garrulous tongue was clear proof of uncontrolled gluttony. When they must needs utter any necessary words at meals, let them speak gently and in a low tone. Did not Martha call Mary secretly?" asked the Archbishop. Neither had they obeyed the command to fill up vacancies in their number duly and choose such as were poor, but they

regarded performance rather than promise. Certain of them, not humble and lowly men as the founder had ordained, but arrogant and presumptuous, studied the Canon Law, "lingering in its enticements." Others read medicine, calling it philosophy, striving therein to make good the letter, but careless of the spirit, of the statutes. In all these matters the Archbishop bade them return to obedience.

There was also dissension between the scholars and the first Warden of the House, Peter de Abyngdon. He bade them go out on business for the College, and they refused. He was not admitted to their weekly "ratiocinia." When he sought to enforce discipline among scholars and servants of the College, they who were bound to give him help sate idly by or refused to enforce his commands. "Rotten limbs, they shall be cut off if they do not amend," wrote the Archbishop. The bonds of discipline must be tightened. No scholar might go alone into the town. All must return before dark. They must be loyal to the Warden.

It is evident that the scholars, having for ten years been left free of the Warden's presence and control, not unnaturally were apt to resent this when in 1274 he was set over the Oxford Community. And, despite the Archbishop's intervention in 1284, the quarrel was still raging in November of that year.* Probably for this reason the Warden resigned in 1286, and was succeeded by Richard Werblysdon. In return, however, for his gift of his houses opposite the College, later known as Postmasters'† Hall, the late Warden

* Reg. Peck. 236 b, 211 b.

† However unsatisfactory as a translation of "Portionista," the

was admitted in 1290 "Confrater" of the Society with a right to a vote at meetings and to an annual commemoration in the Chapel on Tuesday in Easter week.* Another considerable benefaction was received in April 1295 from Ela Longspee, Countess of Warwick. In return for which the Countess Ela's commemoration day was fixed on February 24, and kept loyally till 1559.† And in 1300 two Fellows of the College, Henry of Fodryngeye and Robert of Candeur, mindful of their founder's solemn injunction to remember the College in the day of their wealth, bestowed upon it lands at Kibworth Harcourt.‡

Richard Werblysdon was succeeded as Warden in 1295 by John de la More (Proctor 1288). On his resignation in October 1299, John de Wantynge was elected. A report that the College was suffering because of its Warden's age and infirmities reached Archbishop Reynolds in 1326, but the College vigorously denied this, affirming its great and continued prosperity under John de Wantynge's rule.§ He was succeeded in 1328 by Robert Trenge, who died of the Black Death in 1351. The last Wardens of the century were William Durant (to 1375), John Bloxham (1375–1387), John Wendover (1387–1398), Edmund Beckynham (1398–1416).

word "Postmaster" is now so consecrated by usage that I employ it throughout.

* Rec. 231, 262, 269, 2791; Rot. Parl. i. 63 b; Arch. i. 7, fol. 15; *cf.* Twyne, iii. 595; Hearne, O.H.S. xiii. 389.

† Rec. 2707; Kilner, MSS. ii. 243–6; Wood, "History," 4, and Register *passim*.

‡ O.H.S. xxxii. 100, 101; Anc. Pet. File 61, No. 3008.

§ Reg. Reynolds, 194 a.

### Early Fame and Scholars of the College.

Internal quarrels prevented neither the repute nor the influence of Merton College in the University of Oxford in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. For over a century after its foundation it was *par excellence*, *The* College. The others founded at this time, University, Balliol, Exeter, Oriel, Queen's, were merely "Aulæ consimiles."* The early statutes of University College seem based upon, those of Oriel all but a copy of, those of Merton. Balliol and Exeter displayed more independence. When Queen's College was founded in 1341, to consist of a Provost and twelve Fellows, several of these either were or had been Fellows of Merton.† In 1361, Simon Islep, Archbishop of Canterbury, formerly Fellow of Merton, founded Canterbury College on the Merton model, and chose John Wyclif, sometime Fellow of Merton, as Master. And the founder of New College, which should for riches and splendour wrest the claim of primacy from Merton, was not only greatly helped in his task of foundation by two Merton Fellows, John of Buckingham, Canon of York, and John of Campden, Canon of Southwell, but chose as the first Warden of the Wykehamist scholars before the formal incorporation, Richard de Tonworth, Fellow of Merton. New College Library, too, largely owed its origin to a generous gift of books from the famous Mertonian, William Rede, Bishop of Chichester. And Thos. de Cranley, Fellow of Merton 1366, was first Warden of Winchester College in

* *Cf.* Boase, O.H.S. xxvii. p. i.–iii.; Shadwell ap. Clark, "Coll." 88.

† Magrath ap. Clark, "Coll." 128.

1382, whence he came as Warden to New College in 1393.*

This early pre-eminence of Merton was due, not only to its riches and buildings, but also to its scholars, whose repute spread far beyond the walls of the city of Oxford. In scholastic philosophy it boasted the names of Walter Burley, the "Doctor perspicuus," Fellow 1305; Thomas Bradwardine, the "Profound Doctor," Fellow 1323,† who ended a brilliant career as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1349. His earlier contemporary, John Dumbleton, philosopher and theologian, and the great logician of the reign of Edward III., Roger Swynshed or Suicet, probably were Mertonians.‡ The latter's "Sophismata Logicalia" are discussed in what is one of the most rare and interesting books to-day in the College Library, the "Logica" of the early Oxford Press of 1483. And (greatest name of all) it is fairly certain that John Wyclif was Fellow of Merton.‡

If, besides, the three great names of Roger Bacon, of Duns Scotus, the "Subtle Doctor," and of William of Ockham, the "Invincible Doctor," are associated with the College by an immemorial tradition that they were Fellows, even though the historic conscience cannot accept such an association,‡ yet what does the very tradition itself prove other than this? That when men in times past inquired to what House of Learning had belonged the three greatest Oxford men of the Middle Ages, scholars whose learning, philosophers whose

* Leach, O.H.S. xxxii. 214–215; Wylie, "Henry IV.," iii. 162; Brodrick, pp. 204, 214.

† Mert. MSS. 4173 b.

‡ See Appendix C.—"Some disputed members of the College."

reasoning, was renowned above all other men's throughout Europe, to this inquiry there could be but one answer: that they owed allegiance to what was then the first House of Learning in the University, Merton College. With equanimity, therefore, the Mertonian may look on the portrait of Duns Scotus which hangs in Merton Hall.

To this same time belong four other men of note, all Fellows of the College.* Not only scholastic philosophy and theology, but now, despite Archiepiscopal injunctions, medicine, astronomy, and mathematics were studied there. To the College belonged John of Gaddesden, physician to Edward II., who compounded a most notable elixir, the "Rosa Medicinæ." † His contemporary was John Maudith, physician, astronomer, theologian, who constructed astronomical tables. Simon Bredon had been originally Fellow of Balliol, but migrated as Fellow to Merton in 1330, and to the "severe discipline" there may be ascribed his discoveries in medicine, astronomy, and mathematics. In 1357 a brother Fellow wrote in praise of his treatise on Astronomy in rhyming verse:

> "Qui cupis Astrorum septem bene scire sophiam,
> Hunc lege tractatum qui continet Astronomĭam.
> Namque domus Merton hoc fecerat arte potitus
> Astronomus Bredon consocius atque peritus.
> O Deus Astripotens, animæ Bredon miserêre,
> Cum sanctis statuas qui dicunt κυριε χαιρε." ‡

The rhymer, John Ashynden, Fellow 1338, was himself yet more famous than Bredon in astronomy, mathematics, and botany. Indeed, Merton College was long

* For all four, *vide* all the "Catalogues."
† *Cf.* Wylie, "Henry IV.," ii. 249.
‡ Twyne, xxii. 324.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



renowned for such studies as these. In the sixteenth century it was the most famous, indeed well-nigh the only, home of medical study in the University.* The present Savilian Professors of Astronomy and Geometry bear the name of one of Merton's greatest Wardens. And in the Zodiacal signs in the archway to the Fellows' Quadrangle, in the dial on the outside of the east wall of the Chapel choir, in the Astrolabes, preserved in the Library, are further proofs, if such were needed, of the Mertonian interest in astronomy.

This scientific zeal had its origin at Merton in the work of these her early scholars of the fourteenth century.

"Their works . . . being reposed in the College Library did much advance those studies among us. But all such rarities being looked upon as diabolical and anti-Christian in the time of King Edward VI. were all throne out of the library."†

Notwithstanding, their fame and their example remain.

To be leaders of the Church the College sent out during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries no fewer than six Archbishops of Canterbury: Robert de Winchelsey (1294–1313);‡ Simon Mepham (1328–1333);‡ John de Stratford,§ translated from Winchester (1333–1348); John de Ufford (1348); Thomas Bradwardine (1349); and Simon Islep (1349–1366). Merton Bishops of the period number nine—viz., of London: Ralph de Baldoc‖ (1304–1313) and Stephen de Gravesend¶ (1318–1338); Chichester: John de Langton (1305–1337), Robert de Stratford (1337–1362) and William Rede (1369–1385); Salisbury: Roger de Martivall (1315–

* *Cf. infra.*
‡ Doubtful.
‖ Denied by Wood.
† Wood, MSS. Mert. 4. c.
§ Name in Bursars' rolls only.
¶ Doubtful; not in "Vet Cat."

1329); Llandaff: John de Monmouth* (1296–1323); St. David's: Henry Gower (1328–1347); Worcester: John Green (1395: his election was, however, annulled by the Pope). Besides these, Anthony Bek, Bishop of Durham (1283) and Thomas Bek, Bishop of St. David's (1280–1319) and Lincoln (1319) may in a sense be counted as belonging to the College.† Three Archbishops of Dublin were Mertonians: William de Hothun (1297), Robert Wickford (1375–1390), and Thomas de Cranley (1397–1417), also Chancellor of Ireland (1399–1406). Up to this year, 1898, Merton has nurtured eleven Archbishops and some forty Bishops of the United Kingdom and Ireland. From the first foundation the College has thus never failed to fulfil the purpose of its founder, "ad profectum ecclesiæ."

To the University Merton supplied, during this period, at least seventeen Chancellors, five Vice-Chancellors, and twenty-nine Proctors. The position of Merton, relative to other Colleges, is shown also in this, that of the sixty-nine Proctors known to have held office during the fourteenth century, twenty-seven are Mertonians, and only twenty-one belong to all the other Colleges put together. In the case of the rest there is no College specified.

### The King and the Postern Gate.

Scholastic philosophy and dialectical subtleties were the chief delight of the age and pursuit of the University. As it was to Merton that were ascribed the greatest names in these studies, so it was certain Merton Fellows who displayed proficiency in them before the

* Doubtful: not in "Vet. Cat." † *Cf. supra*, p. 11.

wondering King Edward II., as runs the "merry tale" preserved by Anthony Wood:*

"Severall of the fellows of the said College, being desirous to have a backgate to take the aire <to walk in the meadowes> make their address to the King. . . . Being come before him, the senior of them began thus to speak:—

"'Insignissime domine rex' . . .

"Rex. 'Quinam estis vos?'

"Mri. 'Nos sumus de magistris vestris.'

"Rex. 'De quibus magistris?'

"Mri. 'De magistris venerabilis domus Convocationis et de collegio Merton.'

"Rex. 'Quid vultis, magistri?'

"Magister senior. 'Insignisssime domine rex, volumus ostium factum.'

"'No!' (answered another Master), 'nolumus ostium factum; sic enim injurabimus proximos, sed volumus ostium in fieri.'

"'Nay not soe!' (replied another Master). 'Nolumus ostium in fieri' (saith he), 'nam tunc potest esse in hoc fieri illo fieri et altero fieri et sic in infinitum; sed volumus ostium in facto esse.'

"To whom the King deliberatly answered: 'Egregii magistri, discedite et inter vos concordate; et tum demum habebitis ostium.'

"So like the men of Gotham they went away as wise as they came."†

Thus the story "passeth successively from one generation to another."

But the Bishop of Durham waxed wroth at the tale-teller.

"It had becom'd him to have had a better conceit of the worth of that College in Oxon, soe famous for antiquity and learning, than to imagine that it should be soe utterly forlorn of tru oratory and grammer as that their choicest scollers therin should not be able to expresse this message in Latine intelligently, especially to soe great a king."†

Of course the tale is merely a skit on the Oxford

* "City," pp. 248–9, where there is also another longer English version of the tale.

† English version.

schools,* or it might be urged that it gives additional proof of the truth of Archbishop Peckham's lament that the scholars of Merton neglected their Latin and their "Grammaticus." But if Latin suffered, clearly it was a triumph of logic.

### Merton Men and Oxford Riots.

"Inter vos concordate!" Did logic ever tend to such a result?

The scholars of Oxford of the time were as a class turbulent and aggressive, bachelors and masters no less so than undergraduates. And Merton men were in the thick of every fray.

First they quarrelled bitterly among themselves three times a year at "scrutiny" time. The famous record of the "scrutiny" of 1338–1339 is evidence.† Chief offender on this occasion was John the Chaplain, who wore unfitting boots and dress. He quarrelled daily with his servant, and called him a thief. He was negligent in church. Other Fellows, too, wore "dishonest boots." Some kept dogs, and by their laziness hindered study. Some talked at table. Another "quum loquitur cum sociis non vult permittere eos loqui." Some refused to give advice in College meeting. The Warden quarrelled with the Fellows, talked too much, neglected his financial duties, and absented himself without good cause. One Fellow "intulit minas mortales" on another, who not unnaturally was resentful. Some said it was time to elect new Fellows: others complained they could not get books. One Fellow

* A. Clark, *loc. cit.*

† At length in Rogers's "Prices," ii. 670–674, and Brodrick, "Mem." App. C.

declared the honour of certain others was blackened. This caused much indignation. Another went so far on the path of shamelessness as to call the Warden "Robert" in the presence of all. Most agreed "quod non est caritas inter socios." Evidently the scrutiny acted as a safety-valve, and probably so served the cause of mutual peace better than the elaborate injunctions again drawn up in this century to ensure it.*

As a body, the scholars of Merton had many a legal contest with the city, chiefly on the question of their rights in Holywell. There is record of such in 1285, 1315, 1383. In 1384 Merton routed the enemy.† But the fight was renewed fiercely after a temporary lull in the seventeenth century with other fortune. Another bone of contention was the control over the fosse called Canditch, outside the city wall. The burghers, about 1380, obtained royal permission to clean it out and order it duly for defence. The scholars alleged this permission was won on false pretences. The citizens simply desired to tease and annoy their neighbours. Merton marched to the ditch in order of battle, and proceeded to fill it up again.‡

In other fiercer warfare the Merton scholars played their part. A more serious fray than usual between Northern and Southern students in the University in 1334 led to the retreat of the former, who, vanquished in the battle, shook the dust off the soles of their feet against Oxford, and withdrew to set up a rival University at Stamford. This Stamford schism filled the authorities with dismay. It was well-nigh as light a

* "Mert. Arch." i. 7.

† Rec. 2704; Wood, "City," 380; "Annals," 511.

‡ Anc. Pet. File 132, No. 6585, Maxwell-Lyte, p. 307.

task in those days to dissolve an old, as to set up a new, studium generale. Oxford was seriously threatened. The King was forced to interfere to recall the Northerners in 1335, and the oath not to lecture at Stamford was till recently still required of all aspirants to the Master's degree. Now it has gone the way of other picturesque and harmless survivals.

In the fray, it seems, Merton took the part of the Northerners. One of its Fellows, John Turslington, lectured at Stamford in 1335. And the College could make its peace with an indignant University only by promising to refuse to Northern students access to their Society.* And though this promise was afterwards disregarded, as, indeed, it ran altogether contrary to the tenor of the Merton statutes, still from this time onwards Merton was chief champion and representative of the Southern faction in the University riots.

The leading hero of this faction was a doctor of divinity, one John Wyllyot, Fellow of Merton in 1334, whom his partisans by violence and rioting triumphantly created Chancellor in 1349. His opponent, the Northern Proctor, was banished from Oxford. "On those that did oppose him they laid violent hands, beat, kicked about, and cudgeld, till some were sorely wounded and others in a manner killed." In vain the Royal Commissioners strove to depose him from office. The Merton men stood firm. If worsted after a final effort by superior force of arms, they would retire from the University and draw all the Southern men after them. Chancellor was John Wyllyot and Chancellor he remained. Nor in after years was he ungrateful.†

* Wood, "Annals," 426; *cf.* Henson in O.H.S. v. p. 7.

† Wood, "Annals," 448–9; *cf.* Henson, O.H.S. v. 29.

Again in 1388 ensued fresh warfare. The Welsh students were not, it seems, popular, nor at that time had they common walls behind which to bid defiance to the enemy. In this year the Northerners fell upon them, and they suffered heavily. While their goods were being plundered and the victors carousing amid the ruins of their halls, they were fleeing from the town. But help came on the third day. The scholars of Merton gathered to reinforce them. Together the allies drove the "Boreales" from the streets to take shelter in their own halls, and the Welsh by the help of Merton were avenged of their foes. So boasts the chronicler of the Principality, Adam of Usk.*

Even in the sixteenth century these struggles of North and South continued. On August 8, 1506, at four in the afternoon, the High Street by S. Mary's was a scene of battle royal. Masters and scholars indifferently, even the reverend Principals of Halls, plunged into the fray with swords and bows. The then Principal of S. Alban Hall, John Forster, Fellow of Merton, and four other Merton Masters battled for the South, inflicting divers wounds on the enemy. Punished as they were by the Warden and seniors afterwards by the loss of commons and the charge to attend each and every "disputation" (the equivalent of the modern lecture) in the College Hall, whence at meal times they were strictly banished, none the less they had some compensation. They had escaped with their lives, while S. Alban Hall and Stapeldon Hall had left each a scholar, and Hart Hall its Principal, dead on the field.†

* Maxwell-Lyte, p. 309.

† Coll. Reg.; *cf.* Maxwell-Lyte, p. 380.

Still more deadly was the hostility between Town and Gown, in which, too, Merton played its part. Never before or since has such ruthless war raged in the streets of Oxford as in the early days of February in 1354. The "riot on S. Scholastica's day" broke out on February 10 owing to a quarrel of some clerks in a tavern with its owner. The citizens flocked out with bows and arrows, and pursued scholars and Vice-Chancellors together in hurried rout. The bells of S. Martin's and S. Mary's rang to arms. What though it had been long since forbidden scholars to carry them? Now was seen the use of secret disobedience. With bows and arrows they gathered, and drove off the foe. Night fell and the honours of the day were equal. On the morrow the clerks went gaily to their lectures. Such pleasantries as had befallen the day before were frequent and ended in their eyes at sunset. The citizens thought otherwise. An ambush of archers was laid in S. Giles' Church and broke out upon the scholars in their peaceful afternoon amusements in the fields outside. Again alarums and excursions. But now the fight was no longer equal. By the West gate poured in two thousand peasantry with black flag flying to aid the burgess army. And then ensued a scene of sack and fire, till the scholars took refuge in such halls as had been strong enough to withstand the flames. The third day dawned and they dared not venture forth. But the masses of the enemy stormed the halls and carried them. Scholars were slain outright or carried off wounded to the city prison. There was no mercy shown nor the horror of torture spared. In vain old enmities were reconciled. In long procession came forth the friars from the monastery gates, chanting

their solemn litany, with crucifix of peace raised high, to shelter their brother-clerks against "the Canaanites and Lepers of Townsmen." But what aid should this be against the brutal fury of all-conquering peasant and citizen? Scholars were killed praying at altars in sanctuary. Why not, therefore, though they clung to friars who bore the Sacred Host itself? Down went the crucifix, trampled in the press. One refuge only remained from the third day's slaughter, and the survivors of the scholars fled forth from the city of destruction.

One refuge only to all save the men of Merton. Behind the strong walls their founder had given them they defied all assaults of the enemy. Though else the University was left empty and desolate they remained. The victorious citizen army triumphed outside the walls of Merton. Within, the scholars waited the breaking of the day of vengeance. And while for a year the city lay in sullen humiliation under ban and interdict, neither was there any scholastic act at all, the scholars of Merton stayed to pass their days in prayer and lamentation, "composing tragical relations in verse and prose of the conflict." Still there survives in the "Wail of the University" the poem of the defeat. Still in a manuscript of Merton Library may be seen another poem of lament sent the King for the sufferings of the day of S. Scholastica.*

Thus there was always good precedent for any Fellow of Merton who became involved in the often renewed battle of Town *v.* Gown.

* Wood, "Annals," 456–469; Rashdall, ii. 403–406; O.H.S. xxxii. pp. 165 *sq.*; Mert. MS. No. 306.

### John Wyclif and the Lollard Movement.

The greatest English name of the fourteenth century is perhaps that of John Wyclif. True precursor of the Reformation in his denunciations of the ecclesiastical system of his time, in his struggles with the institutions and doctrine of the Romish Church, defender of civil and religious liberties of the nation, who through John Hus kindled in Bohemia the flame spread by his own followers through the length and breadth of England, standing in his message of protest against Rome midway between Ockham and Luther, John Wyclif claims perhaps the first place in the roll of Oxford Reformers.

Great movements which issue in lasting results are surely never the work of ignorant men, however enthusiastic and fanatical. John Wyclif, like John Wesley four centuries later, was a scholar, and Fellow of his College at Oxford. Theologian and philosopher, logician and controversialist, he poured forth work after work in untiring stream.* And it was over Oxford that he cast the spell of greatest attraction. For the young Oxford scholars "*εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον ηὐκαίρουν ἢ λέγειν τι ἢ ἀκούειν καινότερον.*" Not in appealing to the passions and prejudices of the ignorant, but in answering the cry for knowledge and thought's right to be independent of arbitrary authority lay the strength of the influence over the University of Oxford of this earliest "Assertor Evangelisticæ puritatis contra sui seculi hypocritas et tenebriones."†

Merton College was naturally disposed to look with sympathy upon his teaching. He himself was Fellow

* The Merton Catalogue Wilson gives the names of 234 in about 280 volumes.

† Cat. Savile, p. 18.

of the College before being chosen Master of Balliol about 1360.* That College whose members were straitly bound to enter no regular religious order would doubtless find much in common with the fierce assailant of monks and friars, whose institution "non fundatur in evangelio." † Merton and Exeter were joined in a common bond of interest in the new teaching.‡ Between 1360 and 1384 we hear of five Fellows of Merton known to be no small admirers of Wyclif and his doctrines. These were Thos. Hulman, John Aston, Thos. Brytwell, Walter Brytte, and William James, who defended publicly the Wyclifite doctrine of the Eucharist.§ And the general reluctance in the College to take holy orders, which in 1401 called forth severe Archiepiscopal censure, may have been due to Wyclif's theories of preaching and the ministry.‖

But Merton College was by no means unanimous in its support of Wyclif. Neither is it the case, as some have supposed, that it was known henceforward as the "Lollard" College, or its members as a class as "Lollards." This name seems to have been bestowed on the Mertonians first in the early Hanoverian period, at a time when there were "ten Tories in the University to one Whig," by reason of the strong Whig sentiments and loyalty of the College.¶ If some of the Merton Fellows were adherents, others were bitterly

* *Cf.* App. C.

† W. Soc. "Pol. Works," p. 496.

‡ *Cf.* Boase, O.H.S. xxvii. p. xxvii.

§ *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," 492–3, 510 *sqq.*; Lewis, "Life of Wyclif," c. 10.

‖ "Mert. Arch." i. 7.

¶ At least, I can find no earlier use of the name Lollard applied to the members of Merton than in "Terræ filius," pp. 111, 112.

opposed to the whole movement. Nor were these men of small note. Chaucer's "philosophical" poet, Ralph Strode, was Fellow in 1360. He was author of a poem, the "Fantasma Radulphi," and to him, together with Gower, Chaucer sent for approval his "Troilus and Criseyde."

> "O moral Gower, this book I directe
> To thee, and to the philosophical Strode,
> To vouchen sauf, ther nede is, to correcte,
> Of your benignitiees and zeles gode."
>
> Troilus, v. 1856–59.

Strode was author, however, not only of poetry but also of a work called "Positiones contra Wiclevum."* A brother Fellow, William Berton, Chancellor 1379–1382, wrote works against, and "excommunicated," the Reformer.† Nicholas Pont, Fellow in 1406, shared in his opinion, and fiercely assailed Richard Fleming, then a staunch disciple. And just as Fleming later changed his views entirely, and founded Lincoln College "to defend the mysteries of the sacred page against those ignorant laics who profaned with swinish snouts its most holy pearls," so a Mertonian of some repute, Robert Rygge, Chancellor many times between 1381–1391, was at first sympathetic, yet in 1382 presided at the official condemnation of Wyclifite doctrines by the University.

In fact, the tide turned and ran strongly in the opposite direction, mainly owing to the efforts made from the See of Canterbury. Archbishop Courtenay (1381–96) visited Merton and Canterbury Colleges in 1384. He endeavoured, says Wood, to root out the Wyclifites, but in vain. For the University at the

* *Cf.* Cat. Vet. fol. 64 b; Skeat's "Chaucer," ii. p. 505.

† Cat. Vet. and Wils.

beginning of the next century was still "overwhelmed with Wyclifism." Some, however, of the Merton Fellows suffered severely in his Visitation. One was condemned for heresy and another recanted.* But if Courtenay chastised the "heretic" with whips, his successor, Archbishop Thomas Arundel, chastised him with scorpions. In 1409, after consulting with a Commission of Twelve, he published a series of Constitutions condemning Lollardism in general, and two hundred and sixty-seven passages from Wyclif's books in particular. On that Commission three Merton men sate—Robert Gilbert, afterwards Warden and Bishop of London; Thomas Rodeborne, afterwards Warden and Bishop of S. David's; and John Luke. These Constitutions were published at Oxford.

But the matter was not only a question of doctrine: it was also one of University rights and privileges. For in 1395 Pope Boniface IX. had issued a Bull declaring the University independent of any episcopal jurisdiction in England. Hence the University held stoutly by its rights and denied the Archbishop's right of interference.

For the time Arundel was baffled. But in 1411 he returned to the attack, and visited the University. Oriel then stood forth as champion against him, and barricaded S. Mary's in his face. His interdict was simply disregarded. The Chancellor, Richard Courtenay, and the Proctors held out as stubbornly as Cornish cliffs against the western sea. The Archbishop fled from Oxford after two days. But now the King intervened. The University submitted to arbitration and was worsted. The Chancellor resigned, and in the vacancy the Warden of Merton, Edmund Beckynham,

* Wood, "Annals," pp. 510 *sq.*; *cf.* Liber Ruber, fol. 26 B.

then Senior Doctor of Divinity in the University, was entrusted with the administration. Wyclif's doctrines were finally condemned and his books publicly burnt. *

The finishing stroke was dealt by Arundel's successor, Henry Chichele. In 1425 he visited Merton and the other Oxford Colleges under his jurisdiction by his deputies, William Lyndewood and Thomas Bromis. Though by this time Lollardism had hopelessly discredited itself by endeavouring to combine its peculiar religious zeal with a political propaganda, surely a most abhorrent combination, yet the embers of the old discontent seem still to have been smouldering in Oxford, since the Visitors made "a close search into heretical pravity, punishing some by suspension and others by expulsion."† After playing a brave part at Merton and elsewhere for over sixty years, the doctrines of Wyclif vanished from the University for a century.

### Wyllyot's Portionistæ.

The close of the fourteenth century saw two most notable benefactions to the College, both from old scholars. Both have continued to exist to this day, the one contributing as much to the life and vigour of the College as the other to its studies and its beauty. Within a very few years of each other, John Wyllyot in 1380 instituted the second class of Merton scholars, the Portionistæ, called for many years past, though for no very good reason, the "Postmasters," and Bishop Rede in 1377–79 built the College Library, oldest and most beautiful library in the whole of Oxford.‡

* Wylie, "Henry IV." iii. c. 84–6; Stubbs, "Const. Hist." iii. c. 18; Wood, "Annals," 551, 552.

† Wood, "Annals," 570, 571.

‡ For Library, further *cf.* Part ii.

John Wyllyot, Fellow 1334, Chancellor 1349, and one of the three names presented to the Visitor on Bloxham's election to the Wardenship in 1375, instituted the order of "boys who have a stinted portion" (*i.e.*, compared to that of the scholars), or Portionistæ, in 1380.* By many gifts, including that of "Battys Yn," or the "Fleur De Luce" Inn, in Oxford, he provided moneys to permanently maintain nine of such "poore schollers" in close dependence upon Merton College. They were housed in the dwelling opposite the College which Peter de Abyngdon had given the society, which from 1276 had been let out by the College as a Grammar School.† They received each from 7*d.* to 9*d.* a week, according to the price of corn, for not more than forty-four weeks in the year. They were chosen by the Warden and senior Fellows of Merton (save two places to which for some time the Chancellor of Exeter Cathedral, an office Wyllyot himself had held, appointed). They were to enjoy such bounty for five years; study logic in particular; attend divine service with the Fellows, and be ever loyal and faithful to the College. One Bachelor-Fellow elected annually with a stipend of 13*s.* 4*d.* a year was to be their Principal.‡

Wyllyot's motive in this benefaction which has had such lasting results, and was also the first clear example (in fact, though not in name) of the modern distinction between Orders of "Fellows" and "Scholars," was partly, no doubt, gratitude and loyalty to the College of which he had so long been a member. But another as well

* The date is now certain from Anc. Pet. F. 274, No. 13664 in O.H.S. xxxii. 147; and because the Accounts of the "Masters of the Boys of W.'s foundation" begin in this year.

† Cal. Rec. 339.

‡ "Mert. Arch." ii. 2; *cf.* Wood, "City," 183–4; "History," 4, 5.

may be suggested. It was a frequent charge brought against the friars by the University that they "stole mere children," *i.e.*, persuaded them to take the monastic vows. An agitation started against them on this charge (which they did not deny) by Richard Fitzralph, Archbishop of Armagh, in 1357, lasted up to 1402, when the House of Commons strove to prohibit the taking of such vows under the age of twenty-one.* The result of the friars' activity was that parents kept their sons at home, and the University suffered. It is just at this time that Wyllyot institutes the "Portionistæ" of Merton College. Thereby he secured for his College a supply of promising boys and suggested a line of action which should, if not checkmate the friars, at least hinder the evil effects of their propagandist fervour.†

### The Age of Building.

From the end of the Lollard movement to the beginning of the Tudor period the College lived quietly to itself, taking part in no great outside movement. But to this time is owed a great part of its present buildings. The Library was building in 1377–79; the Transepts, 1360–1425; the majestic and most beautiful Tower of the church, the strength and glory of the College, was finished soon after 1451.‡ The embattled tower over the entrance gate of the College dates its origin from the royal licence of April 4, 1418,§ to the Warden, Thomas Rodeborne, to build such a fortification. The older part of the Warden's house was built, it seems,

* *Cf.* Little in O.H.S. x. 79–81.

† See further in Part ii. chapter i., for the history of the Postmasters.

‡ See further throughout in Part ii. caps. 2 and 3; *cf.* Plate II,

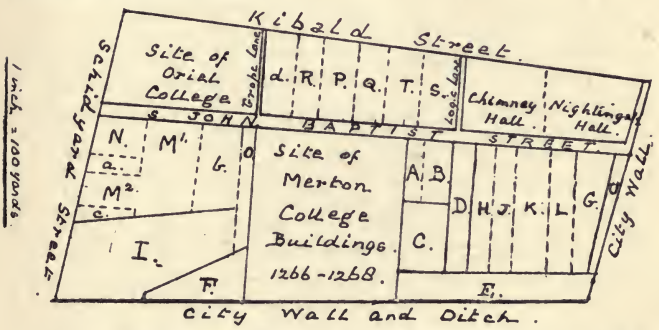
§ Cal. Rec. 178.

chiefly by Henry Sever (Warden 1455–71), and "Sever's Chamber" appears in all later inventories. The old Dining Hall of the College, however, occupying the site of the present building, is earlier.*

Thus to this quiet period of the College Annals are owing the most distinctive external features of the College to-day.

### Final Acquisition of Site.

In this same period, before the Tudor era begins, the College not only saw its buildings rise on the site acquired by the end of 1268, but it also gained all but the whole of its property on both sides of Merton Street. The site of the present Fellows' garden was finally acquired (with the exception of two small strips of land) by 1465; that on which Corpus Christi College now stands by 1430. A diagram will show the relative position and extent of these, and serve to illustrate the process of appropriation.



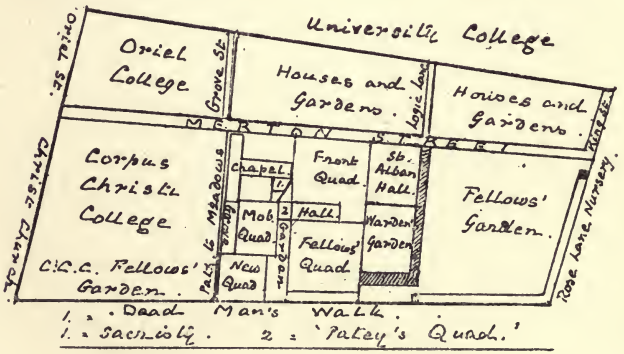

[*Note:* This map is drawn, so far as possible, exactly to scale. Continuous lines mark certain, dotted lines uncertain, boundaries. The map is based almost exclusively on College documents,

* *Cf.* Part ii. cap. 4.

described in the Calendar of Records. A great number of these, mainly of the fourteenth century, give precise descriptions as to the relative position and (often) exact dimensions of the lands and tenements described, as well as their history and the names of their owners at different times. This has enabled me to determine the precise position and extent of the land marked C, D, E, F, I, U, and the relative position of the rest. All these documents are leases or conveyances except No. 375, which is a description of the parish of S. John in 1424, and gives information as to the site of Christopher Hall (M[1]).

This map, it will be seen, differs in several respects from that in Mr. Clark's Wood's "City of Oxford," and the present Warden's map in his "Memorials," and particularly as to the sites of halls where now C. C. C. stands. Wood's description ("City," i. c. 8) is useful at times, as is Twyne MS. iii. 597–602. But I do not think Wood knew his Merton documents thoroughly, and several mistakes of his I correct tacitly in the following description. To give the full proof of each of his errors exceeds the limits of this work. Here I can only give the reference to the documents which establish the above map.

For comparison I append a similar plan of the same ground to-day:—




In the first map capital letters denote property which came at some time to belong to Merton; small letters property which never so belonged.

In the second the shaded portions show the growth of S. Alban Hall and the Warden's garden.]

I. Garden Site.

A. Nun Hall: *cf. supra*, p. 12.

B. S. Alban Hall: acquired Nun Hall soon after 1461; finally became property of Merton College in June 1549 [Rec. 252]; incorporated with the College 1881; archway of communication cut, 1883.

C. Garden of S. Alban Hall: property of Nuns of Littlemore. Leased to Merton by Alice Walcleyn, Prioress, November 4, 1444, to form the "Warden's Garden," which title it has retained ever since. [Rec. 242. Twyne MSS. iii. 592. "Mert. Arch." ii. 17, p. 52 (date 1465).] Lease renewed 1462 from Christiana, Prioress, now including S. Alban Hall *and* Nun Hall, and 1496, at 13*s.* 4*d.* for 67 years. [Rec. 244, 250.] In 1549 it together with B became the property of the College, and frequent mentions afterwards of "Garden of S. Alban Hall" refer to D.

Dimensions of C in 1444 stated as 40 × 21 yards. The present dimensions of Warden's garden are 43 × 28. The additional length thus now comprises the mulberry tree which stands in the strip of land E, acquired by the College in 1318. The additional breadth comprises over half of D, to which thus belonged the raised terrace in the Warden's garden to-day.

D. Site of Hert Hall, property of Walter de Forderinghey, first Master of Balliol, and acquired by Balliol College in 1315. By 1424 the Hall was in ruins, and the land leased as strip of garden land by Balliol to Merton. [Twyne, iii. 602–604.] It measured 206½ × 38½ feet, *i.e.*, reached exactly from the street to the Merton strip of land E, and was *not* a Balliol way to the city wall. The lease was renewed by Balliol at rent of 2*s.* in 1494, and so at intervals up to 1804, when Merton College purchased it for £72. Part of the strip was let to the Principal of S. Alban Hall, and though resumption of this was contemplated in 1828, it was not enforced. The little garden to-day of S. Alban's Hall is the north end of this strip of land, and the front of the Hall has encroached upon the ancient site of Hert Hall. The south part of the strip has been divided between the Warden's and Fellows' gardens. [Coll. Reg. and Rec. 242.]

The shaded parts in the second plan represent the above additions to S. Alban Hall and the Warden's garden.

E. Land by city wall, 17 × 3 perches: granted College in March 1318 leave to enclose it by King Edward II., provided no building upon it, defence of town in no way weakened, and sufficient posterns made. [Rec. 180.] The present terrace, measuring 79 × 5 yards, thus occupies most of length and one-third breadth of strip E. It was raised in winter 1706–7.

G. Land lying between Runsive Hall (L) and the city wall (U). Leased to the College February 1327 by the Brethren of the Order of the Holy Trinity. [Rec. 2660.]

H. Site of Lomb Hall, formerly property (as also was $M^1$) of John of Croxford; given the College in April 1331 by John of Abyndon, William of Haryngton, and Simon of Yiftele. [Rec., 176, 218, 2585.]

J. Site of Elm Hall, property since 1234 of the Nuns of Godstow: leased to College in 1407 by Lady Margaret Mountenay, Prioress. [Rec. 224.]

K. Sites of Great and Little Bileby Hall, property of S. Frideswyde's.

L. Site of Runsive Hall, property of S. Frideswyde's.

These three, J, K, L, were in ruins by 1424, and then divided into two gardens, the eastern of S. Frideswyde's (in which now G was included) and the western of Merton College, "reaching to the city wall" (*i.e.*, including part of E). [Rec. 375.] Later Merton acquired the eastern half as well—perhaps in 1465. [Rec. 78.]

U. The city wall and terrace thereon, 79 yards in length: leased from the city till June 1854, when it was finally exchanged by the College for a house in S. Aldate's.

### II. Bachelors' Garden and Site of C. C. C.

F. Land by city wall, 9 perches long by 5 broad at east end, and 13 feet broad at west end; granted College in March 1318 by Edward II. on same conditions as E. [Rec. 180.]

I. Land measuring 20 perches in length by 5 in breadth at east end and 7 at west end. Formerly 2 tenements, (1) on city wall, that of Walter le Spicer, obtained from him in 1316–17 by John of Greynville, Adam of Lindestede, and Walter of Horkstowe; (2) that of William of Devonshire, formerly of Robert Kepeharm, just north of (1), obtained from his son by the same three Masters in December 1318. [Rec. 217, 192, 177, 219, 281, 223, 290.]

Both together given the College by the Three in March 1321, and royal licence for same. [Rec. 191, 179.]

Together I and F formed the "Bachelors' Garden" of the College.

M. Land formerly two tenements, $M^1$ facing on S. John Street, opposite "Le Oriole," formerly property of Reginald le Bedell and then of John of Croxford; demised April 1316 to Richard Hunsingore. [Rec. 287, 314, 309, 287.] $M^2$ facing on Schidyard Street, and itself formerly two tenements, (1) that of Geoffrey of Hordle (1290), granted by his son to Simon Heygham in 1311, and by Simon

to Richard Hunsingore in 1316. [Rec. 228, 229, 308, 222.] (2) On south of this, that of Adam Huntingdon, demised by his heir in 1316 to Richard Hunsingore. [Rec. 212.] Thus by 1316 Richard Hunsingore acquired all M with its two fronts. From him this land passed from hand to hand till given to the College in 1388 by John Turk and John Bekyngham. [Rec. 270, 221, 291, 93, 294.]

The tenement came to be known as "Nevile's Inn," but the front on S. John Street, with gardens reaching to the College (*i.e.*, Bachelors') garden ($M^1$), was in 1424 "Christopher Hall." [Rec. 375.]

N. Land formerly two tenements, (1) on the corner of the street, that of Adam of Schidyard, and later of Richard Cary, known as "Bor Hall." [Rec. 314, 321, 325.] (2) South of (1) that of William of Chilham (1340). These were joined together in 1356 and formed "Corner Hall" [Rec. 325, 2561, 310], and in June 1430 were given Merton College by Robert Skerne. [Rec. 328.]

O. A tenement opposite Grope Lane, between Merton College and b. At first property of Philip of Ew; granted by John his son to William de Estdene in 1306. [Rec. 2571.] Granted by him to the "Three Masters" (as in I) in 1317, and now known as Goter Hall. Granted by the Three Masters to John of Abyndon, Simon of Yiftele, and William of Haryngton in 1329, and by them given the College in April 1331, as they also gave H. [Rec. 271, 275, 277, 2585. Wood, p. 176.]

This clearly formed the greater part of Merton Grove. By 1424 Goter Hall had disappeared, and it was counted part of the College. [Rec. 375.]

These then are the dates of the acquisition by Merton College of land it once owned on the site of C. C. C.:

Bachelors' Garden: 1318 and 1321.
Merton Grove: 1331.
Nevile's Inn and Christopher Hall: 1388.
Corner Hall: 1430.

a. Leden Porche Hall, property of Nuns of Godstow, on Schidyard Street. Later called Nun Hall. [Rec. 313. Wood, p. 539.]

b. Curteys Hall, property of S. Frideswyde's, facing on S. John Street. [Rec. 2571, 2585.] In 1424 called by some "Urban Hall." [Rec. 375.]

c. Bekes Inn, property of S. Frideswyde's, on Schidyard Street. [Rec. 212, 290, 191. Wood, p. 538.]

All the College property, M, N, I, F, was sold to Bishop Foxe for the founding of C. C. C. on October 20, 1515, for an annuity of £4 6*s.* 8*d.* (!) by Warden Rawlyns. [Rec. 122.] A not unmerited

suspicion rests upon the Warden of having betrayed the interests of the College to his own profit herein. At the same time the Bishop secured a, b, and c.

III. Property on the North Side of S. John Street.

P. Postmasters' Hall and Garden; acquired by Peter de Abyngdon in 1270, and bestowed by him on the College in 1290. [Rec. 262, 231. "Rot. Parl.," i. 63 b.] First a Grammar School, 1276–1380, then home of the Merton Postmasters, 1380–1575, then a private house. Anthony Wood was born here December 17, 1632. In 1815 it was in a ruinous state and part pulled down. On its site now is the College stable.

Q. Knight Hall: granted Peter de Abyngdon in 1275 by the Hospital of S. John, and by him, it seems, the College. A claim to it by the Hospital was abandoned in favour of the College in July 1432. In 1424 it was known as the "Aula parva de Merton." [Rec. 174, 317, 375.]

R. Beam Hall, or "Aula Bohemiæ" [Rec. 375], so called from Gilbert de Biham, Canon of Wells, but absurdly called "Aula Trabina" in the Coll. Register (*e.g.*, 1490). Given the College in April 1331 by the three donors of H and O. [Rec. 2585.] Here the first printing press was set up in Oxford. [Wood, 184, 185.]

S. Aristotle Hall, came to the College probably at end of fifteenth century. (*Cf.* T. and Wood, p. 182.)

T. Colsyll Hall: its site "lately built upon" sold the College by Roger Mathewe and others in December 1513. [Rec. 340.]

d. S. John Baptist's Hall, never, it seems, College property (Wood, 185), now site of the new buildings of C. C. C.

## The Fifteenth Century.

Apart from building operations and the winning of new lands there is little record of events between 1400–83. Royal favour never failed the College, nor did its members forget to serve the State. John Bloxham was often sent by Edward III. as envoy to Ireland and Scotland.* Robert Gilbert (Warden 1416–1417), with five other members of the College, accompanied Henry V. as chaplains to Normandy in 1417.†

* Cat. Vet.

† *Cf.* the note added to the Calendar in the most curious and

Two of the five were afterwards men of some note—viz., Thomas Rodeborne (Warden 1417–22), a man of great learning, especially in mathematics, Bishop of S. David's 1433; and John Kemp. John Kemp's is one of the greatest names in Merton annals. Elected Fellow in 1395, he was successively Bishop of Rochester in 1419, Chichester 1420, London 1422, Archbishop of York 1425, Chancellor of England 1426, Cardinal 1439, Chancellor again 1449–53, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury 1452–53. On missions of State he travelled to France, Switzerland, and Italy. Neither did he forget the College, but gave the west window in the south transept. His nephew, also a Mertonian, Thomas Kemp, for forty years Bishop of London, (1449–89)), left £400 to the College in 1489, which was devoted to the purchase of estates in Essex. He was therefore admitted "frater perpetuus" of the College, and with his uncle commemorated by a solemn service every year in the College chapel on March 28, till 1559 stayed this as all other such commemorations.

Other Mertonian prelates of the period were Robert Gilbert, Bishop of London 1436–48, John Chedworth (Fellow 1422), Bishop of Lincoln 1452–71, and possibly Thomas Brown, Bishop of Rochester 1435 and of Norwich 1436–45. William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester 1447–86, and founder of Magdalen College, is said by some to have been Postmaster at Merton, but there is no sure evidence of this. Between 1400–85 also three Chancellors and three Vice-Chancellors of the University were Mertonians.

picturesque Merton MS. known as the "Liber bestiarius moralizatus," No. 259, fol. 76. This also proves Wood's order of the Wardens Gilbert and Rodeborne quite wrong.

In 1422 Henry Abyndon was elected Warden. He had been representative of the University at the Council of Constance in 1414 which condemned John Hus, and was a "good preacher, and of a voluble and fluent tongue."* In 1671 a stone coffin was discovered in the College chapel to the north of the altar, in which were the bones of a man six feet tall. Many of the early Wardens of Merton were buried in the chapel, and this was thought to be the tomb of Henry Abyndon.†

The financial state of the College was not very satisfactory at this time. Partly, doubtless, this was owing to the activity with which building was carried on. But there was another reason: Archbishop Chichele, in his Visitation of June 1425, had discovered that the number of Fellows, which in 1280 had been forty, was diminishing. Eager, therefore, that the College, which in times past had "like a blazing torch illumined the whole Church of England," should not fall away, he commanded that henceforth there should be forty-four Fellows besides three or four chaplains, and the College appealed against him to Rome in vain.‡ The result of this "*Visitatio malo mala*"§ was the impoverishment of the College, which was much minished and brought low in all but numbers. In the Wardenship of Elias Holcote (1438–55) King Henry VI. strove to relieve it by granting exemptions from taxes in 1438, 1443, and again 1444.‖ But the number could not be main-

* Gutch. *Cf.* Maxwell-Lyte, 303; Brodrick, "Mem." p. 159.

† Wood, "Life and Times," ii. 235.

‡ "Mert. Arch." i. 7. Cal. Rec. 108. Kilner MSS. ii. 249. Bursars' Roll, 3746[1]

§ Twyne, iii. 613.

‖ Cal. Rec. 74, 81, 117, 2789. Kilner MSS. ii. 205–210. Twyne, iii. 588. *Supra*, p. 32.

tained. The average annual number of Fellows at the end of the century was but twenty-two.

Unlike the new foundation of Magdalen College, Merton seems to have been undisturbed by the Wars of the Roses. Only a quarrel with the city on the old grievance of Canditch disturbed the Wardenship of Henry Sever (1455–71). His successor, John Gygur, died on the threshold of the Tudor period, in 1483. The beginning of the College Register in this year introduces us to a minute and detailed account of the internal events of the College history. This has been kept without serious interruption to this day.

# CHAPTER III

## THE TUDOR PERIOD AND THE REFORMATION (1483–1586)

Richard Fitzjames, elected Fellow in 1465, succeeded Gygur as Warden in 1483. His ecclesiastical promotion was rapid, and his career brilliant. In his government of the College, 1483–1507, he displayed firmness and energy, checking abuses, promoting study and reverence, fostering in every way the well-being of the Society.

The number of Fellows, which in 1492 had fallen to seventeen, was increased by 1501 to twenty-seven, a height it did not attain again till the very end of the century in 1599, under Fitzjames' great successor Savile. In fact, it became too heavy a burden on the House to support so many, and a reduction was quickly made. But a timely and generous contribution from the Warden towards the weekly commons, the first benefaction of the kind since that of the Countess Ela, eased the financial stress. The state of the College was so far satisfactory that a sum of £500 was expended in 1490 on the purchase of manors in Essex, though the annual income of the College at this time was not £400.* This doubtless explains why the increase in the number of Fellows was postponed till 1501.

The Merton scholar was still turbulent and hot-

* £385 7*s.* 9*d.* in 1496.

WARDEN'S HOUSE AND EAST END OF HALL

("QUEEN'S CHAMBER" OVER THE ARCHWAY INTO THE FELLOWS' QUADRANGLE)

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

headed, and discipline was sternly enforced. Neglect of study, frequenting suspicious places at night, failure to attend, and irreverence at, divine service in Chapel, wandering round the city after dark, lack of courtesy to seniors, drunkenness and noise, absence from disputations and lectures without cause, quarrelling, new-fashioned gowns, bad manners, unpunctuality at meals, over-familiarity, rioting, all were the objects of punishment, reprimand, admonition.

"Mr. Irlonde called Mr. Chambre a Scotchman. Chambre appealed against him. Irlonde denied the charge, but admitted his words might possibly have been so interpreted. Chambre brought witnesses. Irlonde was admonished to be more careful in future before applying such a name to a fellow." *

Too many games of tennis were played in public places. Still worse were dicing and other "dishonest games." Mr. Hesington must not perform on a musical instrument "in the Meadow."

"Early in the morning of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Masters Wyngar and Johnson, Rectors of the Choir, were absent, the former in bed, the latter gone into the town. For example's sake, Wyngar was ordered to forfeit his dinner and pay 4*d.*: Johnson was fined but a penny. Notwithstanding, being in a rage, he lost his whole dinner, but the other dined in hall." †

It was a misdemeanour to "kick violently on the door of a senior's room." Another had failed to return a book to the Library:

"When summoned to appear before the Dean he was in a terrible perturbation of mind, almost mad. He was gated." ‡

Sumptuary legislation became necessary. In the winter of 1500–1 corn was excessively dear, costing as much as 15*d.* a bushel. There was but one remedy. Commons must be cut down, and the Postmasters for

* Reg., Dec. 18, 1497. † *Ibid.* Sept. 8, 1508. ‡ *Ibid.* 1510.

a time have none save the scraps from the Fellows' table. Disorders followed in Hall.

The founder had exhorted his scholars "above all things in God's name and by their hopes of happiness both in this life and the next" to observe unity and concord. To vote differently on University questions was clearly likely to make a breach and let in the sea of discord. The Merton voters must vote steadily and together. In the year of Fitzjames' resignation, three ventured to run counter to the rest. They were punished by Warden Harper.*

By such means matters spiritual in the House were in fair state, though matters temporal might run ill "in this great time of stress." †

The buildings were well tended. The central part of the present Warden's House was built.‡ The Chapel was beautified with a new roodloft (1486–91), and new stalls and ceiling in the choir (1487–97). An organ was built for £28 in 1489, after the model of one newly set up at Magdalen. The services were carefully conducted, under the control of "Rectors of the Choir." All should sing, save the eight seniors only; nor, if a Bachelor became Master, should he leave off singing. The Postmasters were the choir-boys, each for this receiving yearly 6*s.* 4*d.* Nor might any be chosen Postmaster save he could sing, not only plain song, but the more elaborate "Cantus fractus." § Even a singer was hired from outside to aid the rest.‖

* Reg., Dec. 17, 1507. *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," 663, 664.

† Reg., June 26, 1492.

‡ *Cf.* Plate iii., which shows Fitzjames' building and his arms over the archway.

§ Reg. 1507, fol. 173 b. med., where the "cantus fractus" is illustrated in the margin.

‖ So "Michael the Singer," in 1544, is blamed for negligence.

Perhaps we may picture a day of the life of the Merton scholar at the opening of the sixteenth century. In the cold grey light of a winter morning the Chapel bell summons him with all his fellows and the lads of Wyllyot's foundation to pass under the great new screen and take his place in the chancel. Cold indeed it is, his only warmth, save when pacing in procession up the choir, the candle-light, reflecting gleams from John Martok's great new lectern,* shining up to the bright new roof, and lighting up on the High Altar the reliquary, a fair picture of the Holy Trinity encased in precious stones. High over all towers Bishop Kemp's great gilded cross.† But perhaps in the "tuneful singing of the Masters and the Choir," ‡ he forgets the cold, till, passing out once more, he hurries to his yet colder studies in Bishop Rede's Library.

There the sunlight hardly struggles through the thin lancet windows, falling fitfully on lattice-darkened folios, while the scholar takes his seat on the rough-hewn oaken bench and listens to the massive Latin of the Lombard's wisdom echoing bravely.

But eleven comes, and the bell sounds sharply in the Hall turret.§ One and all the scholars gather for dinner, the Warden with the chaplains at the Hall's end, the rest together, sharing each one measure of food with a brother-scholar. A Latin grace begins and ends the meal; and as they eat, a clerk reads to them the Moralia of St. Gregory or other edifying work. None talks to other save rarely, and in the Latin tongue.

But there must none come late to Hall, nor shall

* Given 1504. *Cf.* Part ii. cap. 2.

† In 1497 the Warden gave reliquary, thurible, censer, and candelabra, value £48 7*s.* 4½*d.* Thos. Kemp gave the cross in 1489.

‡ 1508. § 1304. "Campanarium."

any, though it be a Master, have aught when once the cheese is put upon the table. There shall be no lingering in pleasure of the great fire's warmth. The door of the buttery hatch is closed, and the scholars stream forth into the frosty air. Some practise archery in S. Giles'. Others play tennis in the Merton ball-court. Others go walking, but never in solitude. Such loneliness is straitly forbidden. Leaving books and duties behind they wander, each scholar to his recreation, all perhaps save one unhappy, who for speaking evil of his elders must brave his hour's penance in the Library.

About three they come hastening back, a small "merenda," * perchance, ready for their hunger. The day wanes and the firelight shines on the study windows,† where, under the watchful care of the elder scholars, the younger are working at their books. Yet once more to Chapel Vespers ‡ as night falls, and then the Hall bell rings for supper. This is a happier meal perhaps than dinner and with less restraint. Then, this ended, the Warden sits in the chair of presidence, and the scholars cluster before him to maintain or oppose a thesis. Many a question enters the lists of argument. Wherein does happiness consist, in act of will or act of intellect? Or perchance in works of virtue? But this the scholar arguing denies. What is the Primary Cause of all? The motion of the Heavens? Or Will? Yet is not the First Cause creator of all intelligences, and how much nobler the human Intelligence than the human Will! Yet is not

* Merendare: "meridie edere, quasi post prandium" [Ducange].

† In 1507 Mr. Wayte, "because of his royal office," gave "fire to all hearths." But all chimneys were not finished building till 1592.

‡ So in 1569 at least.

Will potentiality of Intelligence? Is Matter principle of individuality? Whence is the Soul—from some external cause? And may there not be several distinct within the same man? What of the planets now shining in at the Hall windows? Must we needs fashion eccentrics and epicycles to make clear their motion? Is yonder star of the same nature as its orbit? The firelight plays on the wainscoting, and the candle flames burn yellow. What is the nature of colour? Is it inherent in the things seen as coloured, or is not any kind of colour of the same specific nature as the colour of which it is a kind? Rays emitted from the eye cause vision. Carry they not their colour with them?

Thus the grave Latin debate rings on through the company in Merton Hall.*

At last the Warden rises, and the scholars scatter. One last glimpse into the Library. There by some dim light of flickering lamp or candle in mid-December a scholar sits poring over some volume in rude-bound parchment cover, as it rests on the sloping shelf before him, chained cumbrously to the rod beneath.† Till past eight at night he works, then back to the room he shares with a fellow,‡ and silence settles down heavily on Merton College.

Such may we picture the life of a Merton scholar in the days of Warden Fitzjames.§

* All these are actually questions debated in "Variations" at Merton at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

† That the Library was lighted in some way in 1524 is certain, as the Reg. speaks of reading there till 8 P.M. between Nov. 20–Dec. 20. To-day it is most justly "Anathema" to take any light of any kind into it.

‡ Two in a room. Reg. 1512.

§ This whole description is derived from the College Register of the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century.

But that time had dangers and troubles of its own.

"Recordare, Domine, testamenti tui, et dic angelo percutienti, cesset iam manus tua, et non desoletur terra, et ne perdas omnem animam viventem."

Not seldom must this cry have gone up from Merton Chapel. Again and again pestilence swept through the University, study was broken off, the scholars fled from the destroyer, and the streets and quadrangles were hushed in grey unwonted stillness—how often the Merton record of the sixteenth century bears witness. Eight times in Fitzjames' twenty-five years of rule the evil fell on Oxford,* and an "immensis pestis rabiens" threatened the community he governed. The Fellows fled to Cuxham or to Islip, to Stow Wood or Cumnor or Burford, till the plague should be past. But too often there were gaps in their Society when they met again.† Again and again throughout the century term was postponed for this reason. In 1564 the pestilence raged from February to September, and from Oxford it pursued the refugees to Cuxham, and a hurried "sauve qui peut" broke up the house of refuge. Seven years later it fastened a grip upon the University, nor relaxed it for a year, and of 1300 seized but 700 recovered. In 1575 each Merton Master must see that his "young scholar" left Oxford in time, or must tend him if he fell sick. Floods,‡ drought,§ and frost added to the stress of existence, and the Merton scribe notes curiously all. Over two different Christmas days he lingers, the one in 1490, when began a great frost lasting till January 29, wherein men crossed the river on the ice at Hinksey;

* 1486, 1487, 1489, 1492, 1493, 1501, 1503, 1507.

† *E.g.*, as many as eleven in S. Alban Hall died of the plague in 1503, and six Merton Fellows are known to have died of this cause between 1487–1509. ‡ *E.g.*, 1500. § *E.g.*, 1492.

and the other in 1504, when trees were budding, and flowers were already seen in Merton garden. In such records the Merton Past delights: the busier Present leaves them all untold.

In 1496 the Warden became King's Almoner; in 1497 he was chosen to the See of Rochester, and translated thence to Chichester six years later. In 1506 the Bishopric of London was accepted by him. On April 7, 1507, he resigned his office at Merton, to the great grief of the Community. "They were as orphans bereft of parents: the very house seemed uprooted and well-nigh overturned." September 22 was chosen as Commemoration day for Fitzjames, and observed till 1559.* Thomas Harper was named Warden in his stead. On his death at Bristol in November 1508 Richard Rawlyns, Fellow in 1480, Canon of Windsor, and of great repute for his learning, succeeded.

### Richard Rawlyns and John Chambers.

Richard Rawlyns' chief pursuit seems to have been the practice of rhetoric. Never was man more pleased with the sound of his own voice. His flowing periods, far-fetched similes, and solemn platitudes overrun the pages of the Register, and how small a portion of his exuberant magniloquence must that which is preserved represent! When elected Warden, he calls to mind how the Jews were the elect people of God, and the sons of Aaron sub-elected from the Jews, and "will throw aside all doubts he had of his powers." When entering, as new-come Warden, the College gate, he reminds the

* On Jan. 15. A confusion had arisen in 1540 between Saints Mauritius and Maurus, when after a lapse of some years this service was revived.

assembled Fellows of Hector's thought for his kin, of Judas Maccabæus' care for Jerusalem. Newly elected Fellows are received with great exhortation by the Warden. A chapter held at Holywell is delighted with "a grand speech." The Fellows assemble to transact College business. The Warden addresses them: "Let them add virtue to virtue, and science to science." The Warden in his eloquence soars above Pelion piled on Ossa, to reach the heaven of royal favour.

Great was the opportunity in April 1518 when Queen Katherine came to Oxford to pray at S. Frideswyde's shrine, and out of all the colleges chose Merton whereat to dine. As she "condescended so low," so she "exalted our House that its equal cannot be found"—phrases redolent of that elevation of feeling which would characterise a prototype of Mr. Collins.*

Meanwhile the College fared sorrily. In October 1515 Nevile's Inn, Corner Hall, and the Bachelors' Garden were sold to Bishop Foxe, and for a yearly payment of £4 6*s.* 8*d.*! For such a sum the Warden, of his own initiative, against the will of the Fellows, had alienated for ever "part of the homestead of the College." † In vain some protested. The Warden "wreaked on them a most bitter punishment." ‡ Appeal followed appeal from the greater part of the whole body to the Visitor. "Grave and impartial" men of no connection with the College confirmed their plaints. The Warden held out firmly, and mocked at Archbishop Warham's behests to reform. "With grief and penitence we now confess," wrote the Archbishop on

* Reg. *Cf.* Wood, "Annals" ii. 14.

† Fowler, ap. Clark, "Colleges," 274–5, and Cal. Rec. 122. *Cf. supra*, cap. ii., p. 61. ‡ "Mert, Arch," i. 7. Visit. Warham,

September 19, 1521, "it is owing to us that he is Warden. For it is proved he has spoiled the College of lands and rents; he has steadily disobeyed the statutes; he has made himself a party in their despite, and will neither elect as scholars or officers such as will not blindly follow him in this. He visits the College rarely, the manors never. The number of Fellows is reduced to seventeen. Either he must be removed or the College perish. 'Intollerabilis et Collegio inutilis, non solum inutilis sed Collegio plurimum damnosus,' he is by this injunction deposed and for ever from the office of Warden." * So Archbishop Warham deprived the College of its orator.

"Νῦν δὲ τόδε μέγ' ἄριστον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν
Ὅς τὸν λωβητῆρα ἐπεσβόλον ἔσχ' ἀγοράων."

In May 1522 the Archbishop chose Rowland Phillips, an Oriel man, as Warden. He was succeeded in August 1525 by John Chambers.

John Chambers had been elected Fellow in 1492. After successfully repelling the slander of imputed Scotch parentage † he left Oxford in January 1503 to study medicine at Padua, returning in December 1506. One of the founders of the Royal College of Physicians in London, and himself physician to the King, he is, perhaps, the greatest of the many famous doctors of medicine who belong to Merton College. An excellent copy of Holbein's famous Vienna portrait of him hangs in the Senior Common Room. Indeed, the College needed for Warden a man of wisdom and influence, for the storm-clouds were gathering thickly round the University. The King's demand for the University's decree of divorce against Katherine had met with

* "Mert. Arch." i. 7. † *Cf. supra*, p. 67.

violent opposition from the younger Masters and been extorted almost by force. Lutheranism was rapidly increasing, spite of Wolsey's measures. It was a time of change threatening in despite of stubborn hostility.

Even the immemorial customs of the College were rudely set aside by Archbishop Cranmer's deputy in 1534, and discipline thereby so shaken that the Warden won permission from Cranmer to amend the injunctions. So "like a skilful pilot he brought his ship into quiet waters." * This was the lull before the storm.

In May 1544 Chambers, now a very old man, resigned. His successor, Henry Tindall, lived but eighteen months after his election. It fell to the lot of the next four Wardens, three of whom were strangers to the College, to guide it through the dangerous years which followed. These were Thomas Raynolds, of Christ Church (1545–59), James Gervaise (1559–62), John Man, of New College (1562–69), and Thomas Bickley, of Magdalen (1569–86). With Henry Savile the government returns into Mertonian hands. By this time the change in both learning and religion is complete.

### Merton and the New Learning.

Just four centuries ago, when Erasmus came to Oxford, he found there a little group of brilliant scholars, bent on the revival of the study of the Greek language in the University. If Aristotle should still be the corner-stone of the structure of Oxford learning, it should no longer be the Latin Aristotle merely. These aspirations of Grocyn, of Linacre, newly returned from Italy, the "sancta mater studiorum," of Latimer, Colet,

* Arch. i. 7. *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 61–64.

and More, found some welcome, above all in the founding by Bishop Foxe of Corpus Christi College. But not unnaturally the new learning met with no small opposition, especially from the religious students.* It is never easy to revolutionise a system of study, nor does the desirability of such a revolution become quickly apparent. Scholastic philosophy and scholastic theology had struck their roots too deep into the soil of the University to be displaced with ease. The struggle between old and new lasted half a century.

Merton College, boasting the names of the champions of the old learning among her members, had ever earnestly pursued the course of study marked out for her by her founder. The vast majority of books then in her library were those of scholastic theology. Duns Scotus, S. Augustine, S. Thomas Aquinas, S. Gregory, S. Jerome, the "Sentences," these were the favourite studies of the scholars of Merton still at the beginning of the sixteenth century. There were other works also on astronomy, mathematics, and medicine, besides the Latin translations of, and commentaries on, Aristotle. And the themes proposed for "Variations" show a well-nigh unvarying type throughout the century. Many of the earlier examples have been quoted. There is small difference down to Savile's day. The nature of virtue and happiness, of reason and the soul, form down to 1567 the "crambe repetita" of the regent Master, mixed with problems of astronomy, metallurgy, and (very rarely) medicine. Nor was the Mertonian unfamed in such pursuits. Thus in 1510 when a certain Spaniard, a Bachelor of Medicine of Montpelier, gave a public exhibition of his knowledge and skill in disputa-

* Wood, "Annals," 655.

tion before the University, it was a Mertonian, John Blisse, whose ability as "respondent" won applause. In 1517 certain Merton Masters both read books of astrology and lectured on the theory of the planets to the Bachelors.

By 1532 the College was well supplied with astronomical instruments, globes, astrolabes, albions, quadrants, and the like, and others were bought in 1557. In the learning of Scholasticism tempered by a little natural science consisted the studies of the scholar of Merton of the time.

The first hint of change is found in one of Warden Rawlyns' portentous harangues of 1509, which mentions in passing "Duns Scotus and the evil fruits of the subtle science." Perhaps the character of its advocate delayed the course of advance of the rival learning. This was, however, accelerated by Thomas Cromwell. His agents, Richard Layton, John London, and others, in their Visitation of the University in 1535, set to work to establish many Latin and Greek lectureships. At Corpus two were already in existence, but new ones were founded at Magdalen, New College, All Souls, Merton, and Queen's, the last two, it seems, of Latin only, the others of Greek as well. In divinity, and natural and moral philosophy, lectures were also founded, and all scholars pledged to attend one lecture at least each day, on pain of loss of commons. And his Visitors wrote back with cheerful confidence to Cromwell:

"We have set Dunce [*i.e.*, Duns Scotus] in Bocardo [the Oxford prison] and have utterly banished him Oxford for ever, with all his blind glosses."*

The "Trojans" were indeed now driven within walls.

* Camden Soc. "Suppression of Monasteries," No. xxx. Wood, "Annals," ii. 61–64.

By 1539 there is proof at Merton of the advance of the new learning. Bachelors before inception were directed what books to read. Orations of Isocrates and Sallust's Catiline, Cicero de Senectute and Valerius Maximus, Aristotle's Politics and Œconomica, take now their place side by side with works on Latin grammar and moral philosophy. A reaction, however, set in, and in 1549 bachelors were enjoined to read nothing but logic and philosophy, or medicine so far as it was included in the latter. Medicine, indeed, continued to flourish at the College, the stipulation in question not forming at that time any serious obstacle to its study. Galen and Hippocrates oust Avicenna and Constantinus Africanus. And when in 1556 the University lightly bestowed a medical degree on two very ignorant coppersmiths, the College of Physicians complained to Cardinal Pole, who bade the University consult in future with two Merton Doctors of Medicine, George Owen and Thomas Hays, as to the due course of study in the subject.*

King Edward VI.'s Visitors in December 1550 completed the rout of the scholastic philosophy at Merton and elsewhere. Their measures were severe, and they acted as ignorant Vandals. No other outrage on the College Library has ever been conceived in so wanton a spirit of destructive delight. Not only the works of the Schoolmen and "Popish Commentators" were plundered, and ruthlessly ravaged, but also astronomical and mathematical books in vast quantities.

"A cart-load of such books were at once taken out of the Library and sold or given away (if not burnt) for inconsiderable nothings,"

is the indignant statement of an eye-witness, Thomas

* O.H.S. i. p. xi.

Allen.* Many, "put at the disposal of certain ignorant and zealous coxcombs, were condemned to a base use." A few were preserved by certain "lovers of antiquity," and afterwards made their way to the newly founded Bodleian Library. But the great losses to Merton Library were not even so made good, and the sad gaps to-day and absence of many MSS. which once belonged to the College (which, *e.g.*, preserves a poor thirty-four out of the ninety-nine given by Bishop Rede) are examples of the gentle and learned treatment of the University by the Edwardine Visitors.†

Duns Scotus and the Scotists were, indeed, slain, and their "Funeral" celebrated. And if the College exercises undergo small change, probably it is because books were never very necessary to those exercises. Three Mertonians of some note of the time, David de la Hyde, Jasper Heywood, a poet who later turned Jesuit, and John Wolley, Knight and Privy Councillor, mark the transition from the old to the new learning, combining, as they do, attainments in logic and philosophy with classical learning.‡ And the College was brought into association with at least the memory of two of the greatest of the Oxford humanists.

The list of William Grocyn's books, drawn up in 1520 by his executor Thomas Linacre, is preserved among the Merton archives,§ and the name of Linacre himself is closely connected with the history of the College.

On his death in 1524 he bequeathed estates to

* A. Wood. M.S. Ballard, 46.
† *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 107.
‡ Wood, "Annals," ii. 136–7.
§ No. 1046. *Cf.* Burrows in O.H.S. xvi. 317–381.

trustees to institute medical lectureships at the two great Universities, besides an endowment for establishing a Greek lectureship at Oxford. It was Merton College which reaped the harvest of this generosity. The sole surviving trustee, Bishop Tunstall, in 1549 devoted the Linacre bequest to founding two lectureships at Merton, and not University professorships. In this he was influenced partly by the persuasions of Warden Raynolds his friend, but also by the fact that then "there were more physicians in that house than in any other in the University."* On December 10, 1550, they were instituted as a "Higher Lectureship," held usually for life, the first chosen to the place being Robert Barnes (who held it till 1604), and a "Lower," to which re-election was usually annual. The readers were bound to lecture in the College Hall on Galen and Hippocrates to any members of the University who desired to attend. In course of time the uses to which the bequests were put became an abuse, a process not altogether unfamiliar in the annals of benefaction. Both at S. John's College, Cambridge, and at Merton, the happy inheritor of the Linacre bequest received his money gladly and made no pretence of work, although to save appearances and salve consciences it was almost invariably the case that the Fellow elected at Merton to the sinecure was also Doctor of Medicine. In 1800 one Fellow enjoyed the emoluments of both lectureships. But modern reform has amended the evil and linked the University Professorship of Anatomy to the Society of Merton College. For at Merton the revenues of the original benefaction have been preserved. At S. John's, Cambridge, they seem

* *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 862, 863. Johnson, "Life of Linacre," 272–276.

to have been lost in their entirety.* Merton College sinned but temporarily against the memory of the great humanist physician. And such a lapse was in those days but too common.

An early occupant of the Greek chair newly founded at Merton was Thomas Bodley in 1565, who received 26*s.* 8*d.* yearly for his lectures, later raised to 4 marks.† Greek, indeed, was eagerly studied in the College. For "Variations at Austins" and other disputations, Aristotle's Ethics, Politics, Metaphysics, and Topics, were prescribed, and in 1565 it was ordered that none should quote a passage from the Master save in Greek, nor use written notes in his declamation, else grace to incept was refused. Each bachelor was bound to dispute once a week (what is the weekly essay in "Greats" to-day but a reminiscence of this ?), and visitors were admitted to hear the disputations. Thus on September 5, 1566, at the time when Queen Elizabeth paid her first visit to Oxford, a noble company assembled in Merton Hall to delight in the Merton dialectic, viz., the Chancellor Leicester, Spanish Ambassador, and Peers of the Realm. Under such conditions the theme handled by John Wolley, afterwards Latin Secretary to the Queen, and other Mertonians, "An præstaret regi ab optima lege quam ab optimo rege," needed delicacy in the handling.‡

The College, indeed, shared to the full in the new intellectual vigour which distinguished the period of the Reformation. While his senior harangued in Latin on Greek philosophy, the favourite amusement of

* *Cf.* J. F. Payne, in "Dict. Nat. Biog."

† Coll. Reg. *Cf.* "Life of Sir T. Bodley," written by himself in 1609, in "Reliq. Bodl." (London, 1703), p. 2.

‡ Wood, "Annals," ii. 154–163.

the Merton Postmaster was the performing of plays, mainly Latin, in the Hall or Warden's House, a delight he shared at this time with the scholar of Christ Church and of Trinity College, Cambridge. An English comedy, "Wylie Beguylie," initiated the era of the drama at Merton on January 3, 1567. This was followed by the "Eunuchus" of Terence on February 7, "Damon and Pythias" and Plautus' "Menæchmi" in January 1568, and Plautus' "Captivi" in January 1584. Surely there are some Merton customs which it is ill to let die and good service to revive, some displays better even and more worthy of the College than concerts in the College Hall.

### Merton and the Reformation.

It needs not the lapse of many generations to change the tone of any Oxford College with startling perfectness. Nor is such change always but the natural evolution from old to new. It may be quickened, and quickened harshly. If we would discover if perchance some one dominant tone prevails through all the long life history of Merton College, we may find this in the persistent championship by the little College of the unpopular cause, the cause of the minority. At times such advocacy triumphed, as of Puritan or Whig creed. But if finally worsted, Merton could be brought into harmony with the majority only by passing discord. Yet what does the discord other than enhance by its resolution the concord's beauty at the ending?

There had been a time when Merton College had offered ready harbourage to Wyclif's doctrines. Their suppression had been effective. Unflinching persecution succeeds as often as it fails. At the beginning of

the sixteenth century, after Fitzjames' encouragement of reverence and devotion, no College was more loyal to the Church of the time, more staunch in its adherence to the practices and doctrines of the Church of Rome. It is no small error to suppose that Merton College was champion of Protestantism. In very fact the Reformation was forced upon the College. Thrice in its history the College plays a leading part in the history of religion in the University of Oxford. It is a striking proof of the ease of effecting that complete change of tone already mentioned that between the time when Merton College listened readily to Wyclif and that when it stood boldly forth as the great champion of Puritanism in Oxford there comes this period when the members of the College rally to defend the Roman Church. For at this time, whilst this Church's more faint-hearted partisans elsewhere in the University looked on with secret prayers for their victory, but no aid till this should be declared, the Mertonian adherents, despite wrath of Sovereign and Archbishop, endured imprisonment and expulsion rather than submit. The command to study theology bore fruit when for a century and a half before the accession of King Edward VI. that study had been steadfastly pursued on the traditional lines.

Archbishop Cranmer, when appointing Thomas Raynolds to be Warden, declared to the Fellows of Merton in a letter of December 30, 1545, the duty of "renouncing the prerogative of the Romish Church lately usurped amongst us." This was a step to which the little* College had perhaps no great objection,

* It numbered in 1552 only 32 members of every description. Only Exeter, Balliol, Lincoln, Oriel, and University were smaller.

as its members had already recognised the King as "Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England and Ireland."* But from here to the acceptance of Lutheran doctrines was a far cry. The Warden, indeed, has been accused, very probably without justice, of being a turn-coat in 1547.† On the College as a whole the Edwardine Reformation had small influence. When Peter Martyr was sent by authority in 1549 to promulgate such doctrines in the University and sweep converts into his net, and the doctrine of the Eucharist was chosen as main subject of dispute, the opposition was led by the two Merton Fellows, Richard Smyth and William Tresham, then the chief theologians in the University,‡ and the former reputed the first schoolman in England. The Lutheran won but small success. In the Marian Visitation of 1553, but one Fellow of Merton was expelled—viz., John Parkhurst, afterwards Bishop of Norwich (1560–1575) and one of the translators of the Bible. The Warden was now known to be a "strong Papist."§ He was chaplain to Queen Mary in 1555, and named by her Bishop of Hereford two years later. Elizabeth deprived him of his bishopric and Oxford office alike in June 1559, and he died in retirement, if not in prison, at Exeter soon after. In the Roman Catholic revival, indeed, under Mary Tudor, Merton College was prominent. In April 1554 the three great Oxford Reformers, Cranmer, Latimer,

The older Colleges were at this time all (save New College) surpassed in numbers by the later foundations (O.H.S. i. xxi.–xxv.).

* Gamlingay deed of Aug. 7, 1544.

† By Wood, "Annals," ii. 82.

‡ Wood, "Annals," ii. 87–93. The Register is so scanty for these years that Wood becomes our chief authority until 1562.

§ Wood, "Athenæ." ii. 770.

and Ridley, were brought to their old University, and in the choir of S. Mary's Church men sought to confute their doctrines. Six doctors from Cambridge were joined with five from Oxford to maintain the Roman cause. Of the Oxford five two were Mertonians—viz., Smyth and Tresham. Among those who gave evidence against Cranmer in the next year were Robert Ward, senior Fellow of Merton, and Robert Searles, Fellow in 1512, one whose mind was ever variable, as well as Smyth and Tresham.* And while William Martial, Sub-Warden of Merton, as acting Vice-Chancellor,† presided over the burning of Latimer and Ridley on October 16, 1555, it was the same Richard Smyth, then Vice-Chancellor, who preached the sermon before the martyrs' death on the text: "Though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

"And have not charity"! Was this then to be found in the Merton preacher, unconscious of his text's irony?

This page in the annals of the College is indeed, as Strype said of the martyrdom itself, an "ingrateful business." At least there was no lack of zeal for the old religion within its walls, nor hesitation to blazon it abroad. But few indeed were the Mertonians who chose the Protestant side. Parkhurst had fled across seas. It is his Postmaster, in after years more famous than his master, John Jewell, Bishop of Salisbury (1559–1571), who wrote despairingly in May 1559 to Bullinger of Zurich concerning the state of Oxford:

"Whatsoever had been planted there by Peter Martyr was by the means of one Friar Soto and another Spanish monk so wholly

* Strype, "Cranmer," pp. 480, 535. *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 125.

† *Cf.* Brodrick, "Memorials," p. 255, 259.

rooted out that the Lord's vineyard was turned into a wilderness: so that there were scarce two to be found in that University of their judgment."*

And at Merton there was at this time a great and fervent revival of the commemoration of benefactors and requiem masses for the dead. Elizabeth ascended the throne in November 1558. Masses were celebrated in Merton Chapel till May 7, 1559.† Then they abruptly ceased, and for ever. Their place was taken by "Communion Services" in Chapel or "Commemorations" in Hall. One month later followed the deposition of the Warden. The tide was turned.

Events moved swiftly. On December 3, 1560, three Fellows, Robert Dawkes, David de la Hyde, and Anthony Atkins were expelled for "denying the Queen's superioritie," *i.e.*, refusing the Oath of Supremacy. The same month Latin hymns in Hall were abolished and English psalms in metre substituted, "to be sung with the same solemnity as were formerly the hymns." The crisis came on Warden Gervaise's resignation in January 1562.

### John Man's Election.

Archbishop Parker believed but little in compromise. To him, as Visitor, fell the control of Merton College, a wilful, backsliding, recalcitrant society in his eyes. It should be purged, and given a Warden with no Popish leanings.

John Man, of Wiltshire, sometime Fellow of New College, had been expelled that Society for heresy in 1540, and was now the Archbishop's own chaplain, a

* Strype, "Annals," i. i. 195. The evidence that Bishop Hooper belonged to Merton is not worth anything.

† Mass for Thos. Hatfield, Bishop of Durham.

fitting instrument for the work of reformation. In the early spring of 1562 the Archbishop named him Warden of Merton College, an act which, however speciously justified, was perhaps illegal, and certainly was high-handed. This was in itself enough to provoke wrath in the Society, however peaceably disposed. But the College was very far from being at peace with itself. Many of the Fellows were still, despite the expulsions of 1560, bitterly opposed to the changes and novelties in religion thrust upon them, and quarrelled fiercely with their Protestant opponents. And now an alien who knew nothing of the College was to flaunt his hated Lutheranism in their faces by a gross imposition of unjust authority! They girded up their loins and plunged into the fray. Thus Anthony Wood tells the story:*

"The Wardenship of the College being vacant . . . the fellows proceed to election, but instead of choosing three according to the statutes to be presented to the Archbishop, . . . they dissent and nominate five persons of which two or three were never of the House. But all the said five persons the Archbishop refusing, he unworthily confers the Wardenship upon a stranger called by the name of John Manne, whose coming to Merton for admission being not till the latter end of March this year, the government of the College continued still on Mr. Will Hawle, then Subwarden, who being sufficiently known to be inclined to the Roman Catholic religion, was not wanting in the vacancy to retrieve certain customs now by the Reformed accounted superstitious.

"Among such was the singing certain hymns in the College hall round the fire on Holy day evenings and their vigils: which custom being before annulled in Dr. Gervase his time, the Psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins were appointed in their places, which do to this day continue. But so it was that when Mr. James Leech one of the Junior Fellows had took the book into his hand ready to begin one of the said psalms, Mr. Hawle stept from his place offering to snatch the book from him, with an intent, as tis said, to cast it into the

* "Annals," ii. 148–151. I omit some explanatory sentences, here unnecessary.

fire, adding moreover that neither he or the rest would dance after his pipe."

Another account of this is more picturesque:*

"After the Mass was last put down, Hall with one or two more did hide under a piece of the Quire almost all the Popish books of service with divers other monuments of superstition, where they do lie still. He travailed with a scholar of his own to persuade him to Papistry.

"When Mr. Leche, according to an order made in the time of Gervis, to change the superstitious hymns for psalms in English metre, on All Hallow Day began to sing the Te Deum, Hall before half was done came up crying like a madman that they ought not nor should not sing, and struck at the book of psalms to have smitten it into the fire out of Leche's hand: and afterwards plucked it by force out of his hand and threw it away, saying with a trembling body and wan countenance to the Bachelors, 'Are you still piping after his pipe? Will you never have done puling? I shall teach you to do as I bid you.' And they lacked their singing for a great while till one Mr. Gifford, who being second Dean and falling from the faction, began it again."

If Roger Gifford fell from the faction a "great while" after, there could then have been no faction whence he could fall. For within three months of Gervaise's resignation John Man, supported by a goodly company, approached the fast-shut College gate and demanded entrance on March 30. Spite of presence of Vice-Chancellor, Warden of New College, and others, the Fellows refused, and postponed the matter till April 2. That day arrived, the Fellows, in a truly Ottoman spirit, managed on a pretext to postpone the matter again till May 29.†

"Which day being come he appears again at nine o'clock in the morning, accompanied with the before mentioned persons, Hen. Noreys of Wytham, Esqr., and Anthony Forster of Cumnore, Gent.

* Strype, "Life of Parker," i. cap. ii.

† The Reg. proves Wood's dates inadequate. What he ascribes to April 2, therefore, I here transfer to the real day of admittance.

But coming to the College gate they found it shut by the general consent of the fellows. At length after he and his company had tarried there awhile, sends for Mr. John Broke, one of the senior fellows, desiring to let him in and admit him; he therefore being of a base and false spirit opens the gate by some means or other and admits him. At whose entrance the' fellows were so enraged that Mr. Hawle, as tis reported, gave the new Warden a box on the ear for his presumption to enter into the gates without his leave." *

But the battle was won, and the Archbishop's vengeance fell heavily on the conquered.

### The Victory of Protestantism.

On May 26 his Visitors came to Merton. Hall and Gifford were promptly expelled, the former withdrawing to University College, where he died on December 19, the latter winning his way back to Merton by submission later in the year. But still there remained some "inclined to the Catholic religion." On a charge of perjury, John Pott and Ambrose Appleby were expelled, and Henry Atwood resigned his fellowship in 1563. "Hard it went with Tho. Benyer, a great opposer of the Warden's admission."

"Thus were the endeavours of the Roman Catholics of Merton College quelled, the which if not looked after in due season might have risen to a considerable matter: for it was verily thought that other Houses of learning would have shewn themselves what they were in heart upon this opportunity if the Mertonian design had taken place." *

The waters of disquiet were not, however, stilled at once. In 1567 the Fellows were still quarrelling among themselves, and a new "conspiracy to wage law against the Archbishop" on the part of six of the Fellows had to be quieted by suspension and expulsion.† Well

* Wood, *loc. cit.* † Strype, "Parker," i. pp. 498–503.

might their Visitor sigh over the "turbulence of the College." But Matthew Parker was resolute, and in time the smouldering embers of discontent died out. John Man, indeed, was early reft from the scene of trouble, since in February 1566 the Queen sent him as her ambassador to Madrid,

"after Goseman or Gooseman de Sylva, Dean (as it is said) of Toledo, had been sent hither. Of which embassadors the Queen used merrily to say that 'as her brother the King of Spain had sent to her a Goosman, so she to him a Man-Goose.'" *

No Queen knew her servants better. John Man on arriving at Madrid proceeded to speak irreverently of the Pope. Such Protestant enthusiasm, however much in place while the translator of the great "Common-places" of Wolfgang Musculus† sate quietly within the walls of Merton College, was somewhat untimely in an envoy at the court of King Philip. The natural result of his misdirected zeal was the harm of nobody but himself and of nothing but his own religion. He was banished to a country village, deprived the exercise of his own rites, and his servants were forced to attend Mass, while the Queen at home hearkened complaisantly to his laments.‡ Not till December 3, 1568, did he return to Merton, and died but three months later in London.

Under his successor, Thos. Bickley, any last lingering remnants of Roman Catholicism were stamped out of the College. The new Warden himself was a fervent Protestant. As a young demy of Magdalen in 1549, he had distinguished himself by rushing up to the High Altar one Whitsunday and breaking the sacrament in

* Wood, *loc. cit.*

† A perfect copy of the 1573 edition of Man's translation has this year been placed in the Library.

‡ Strype, "Annals," i. 2, 252; iii. 2, 246. Wood, "Athenæ," i. 367.

pieces before a large congregation.* For such selfish and ostentatious advertisement of his own opinions a just Nemesis fell on him, when in 1553 he was ejected by the Marian Visitors. Moreover, he had been chaplain to Edward VI. He fled to France, whence he returned to serve Archbishop Parker as chaplain.† As Governor of Merton College he held the reins firmly. In 1571 a Probationer was not admitted to full fellowship till he had renounced his views on the Authority of the Pope, Sacrifice of the Mass, Transubstantiation, and the Celibacy of the Clergy. He himself gave £100 to found an exhibition the holder of which should preach an annual sermon on May Day in Merton Chapel, which practice (with a few modifications) continued till 1891.‡ Foreigners exiled from their own land for conscience sake received maintenance from the College. Such were Drusius, a Fleming, in 1574, Anthony Corrano, a Spaniard, in 1580, and an Italian, Gentilis, in 1581. In 1585 two Fellows, accused of consorting with "Papists," were admonished. Another in this same year had failed to attend Holy Communion on Christmas Day. He was advised that his absence was ascribed to "Papism," and he must allay the suspicion. Spite of pestilence,§ earthquake,‖ and a quarrel with Archbishop Grindal in 1581, wherein the Warden displayed valiant if fruitless stubbornness on behalf of the College,¶ Bickley was

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 105. † O.H.S. i. 197.

‡ "Mert. Arch." ii. 2, 269. Wood, "Athenæ," ii. 839–841.

§ The terrible one of July 1577, described at great length in the College Register with many Thucydidean reminiscences. Bickley stuck manfully to his post at Oxford when other Heads ran away. Five Mertonians died.

‖ April 6, 1580. ¶ Strype, "Grindal," ii. c. 12.

able to guide Merton back into paths of peace and prosperity. On his resignation, when consecrated in 1586 Bishop of Chichester, he left the College ready to advance under his successor into its most brilliant age. Roman Catholicism no longer divided the House against itself. Yet none surely to-day in here bidding it a lasting farewell would willingly linger on any of that creed's features other than the beauty of reverent devotion wherewith for just three centuries it made bright the life of the Scholars of Merton and earnest their will for service.

But the time was come when the strength of calm judgment must replace devotional mysticism. When next Merton College takes sides in a great political and religious struggle, once again it is champion of an unpopular creed in the University of Oxford. But this time the creed is Puritanism. Yet before it should be yet once more buffeted by the storm of religious controversy, the College should enjoy its golden age of peace.

# CHAPTER IV

## THE GOLDEN AGE AND THE PURITAN MOVEMENT (1586–1660)

THE thirty-five years' rule of Henry Savile was a happy period in the history of Merton College. Perhaps it is true that the College, as the University, was then illumined rather by the rainbow brilliance of fame and material prosperity than by the cold clear light of sober and deep learning. It is not the torch of research that creates the warm glow of a golden age, and a Casaubon is coldly hostile to a Savile. "Wholly destitute of any power to vivify, to correct, to instruct, to enlighten." As some grim rocky Alp frowning over sunny meadows, Pattison's fierce words assail the cultured University of the late Elizabethan age. But a time of stress is past, a time of storm to come. Let the summer mists for a brief space wrap round the crags, and hide their sternness from the peaceful dwellers in the valley.

"As conquering consul in a Roman triumph, as a victor at Olympia," Henry Savile entered Merton College on March 23, 1586, amid a concourse of thousands applauding the favourite of Queen, Cecil, Walsingham, and the Court. "Here was the Mertonian Senate, gleaming with scarlet and purple, submitting themselves to his rule. Might God grant him

FELLOWS' QUADRANGLE, FROM THE GARDEN

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

a long and joyful government, till, passing after a calm old age, he left behind him in the hearts of men a memory that should never die." *

> " He seemed for to be
> A man of greet auctoritee."

Fellow in 1565, a most polished Greek scholar and Greek tutor to the Queen, a traveller in foreign lands, and of many accomplishments, Savile is the most conspicuous Oxonian of his day. On his great edition, in eight volumes, of S. Chrysostom† he laboured many years‡ and spent, it is said, more than £8000. He also translated Tacitus. Generous, courtly, hospitable, he welcomed to his College, as some Italian prince of the Renaissance to his Court, monarch and scholar with equal grace and eagerness. If Isaac Casaubon, whom he entertained at Oxford in 1613 with the most thoughtful care, nourished feelings of distrust against him, it does not follow that a very possible ignorance on Savile's part of Nicetas Chroniates, Laurentius Syslyga, or Espencæus, implies shallowness of learning, though doubtless such ignorance must ever remain a most serious blot on a scholar's reputation, and on that of the University wherein he played no small a part. Doubtless he overrated his own abilities, a most heinous and novel offence of a surety, " in being faine to be thought as great a scholar as Joseph Scaliger." As he was admittedly " as able a mathematician as any of his time," clearly he spread his interests over too wide a field, which, though a most notable tendency of the

* From Fisher's Latin speech of welcome at the College gate.

† Now in the College Library.

‡ In December 1602 the College voted £50 in help. It was not published till 1612.

age, and productive of such great results in English history—what is it but another crime in one who pretended to be a scholar? For the true scholar was he who

> "Properly based *Oun*,
> Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*
> Dead from the waist down."

Yet it is clear that this "extraordinary handsome and beautifull man," than whom "no lady had a finer complexion," was himself a student immersed in books for all he was a courtier, and strove in every way to encourage sound learning and reality of knowledge in his College.

"A very severe governour: his students hated him for his austerity. He could not abide witts: when a young scholar was recommended to him for a good witt—'Out upon him, I'le have nothing to doe with him. Give me the plodding student. If I would look for witts I would goe to Newgate. There be the witts.' John Earles was the only scholar he ever took as recommended for a witt." *

Thus he exercised the greatest care in the Merton elections to fellowships. Small though the College was, yet under his rule it, like the rest of the University, grew rapidly between 1597 and 1612.† The number of Fellows in 1599 rose once more as high as 28, and only once during his Wardenship fell below 20 (19 in 1619). The Postmasters had already been brought into the College. The new class of Commoners was also introduced for a short time in 1607. In all, over 200 Mertonians matriculated at the University during this

* Aubrey, "Brief Lives," ii. 214—a most charming sketch of Savile.

† *Cf.* Wood, "Life," iv. 151. The College income in 1592 was £400, which, though nothing compared to the wealth of Ch. Ch., Magd., and New Coll., is yet a fair average of the rest (Coll. Reg.).

period. In Savile's first election in 1586, two eminent scholars were carefully chosen: Henry Cuffe, later Regius Professor of Greek, whose end, however, was slightly disastrous*; and Francis Mason, the "Vindex Ecclesiae Anglicanae." In his last years, among other good scholars, were elected two who afterwards became most eminent Bishops. In 1619 Edward Reynolds, later Warden and Bishop of Norwich (1660–1676), was admitted Fellow. It is to him the nation owes that perhaps the most beautiful prayer in her liturgy, the "Form of General Thanksgiving." The other was yet more famous.

### Bishop Earle.

John Earle, Bishop of Worcester (1662–1663) and Salisbury (1663–1665), was elected Fellow of Merton in 1621. In the essays of his piquant "Microcosmography" (published 1628) he has surely drawn his University portraits from his seven years experience of Merton College. There is the "old College butler" who

> "is never so well pleased with his place as when a gentleman is beholden to him for showing him the buttery, whom he greets with a cup of single beer and sliced manchet, and tells him it is the fashion of the College. He domineers over freshmen when they first come to the hatch, and puzzles them with strange language of cues and cees, and some broken Latin which he has learnt at his bin;"

the "down-right scholar," who

> "cannot kiss his hand and cry, madam, nor talk idle enough to bear her company. He names the word College too often, and his discourse bears too much on the University. He cannot speak to a dog

* He was hanged at Tyburn in 1601 as an accomplice of Essex, whose secretary he was. Essex's son, Robert Devereux, the third earl, was at Merton 1602.

in his own dialect, and understands Greek better than the language of a falconer. Men make him worse by staring on him;"

the "young gentleman of the University," who

"is one that comes there to wear a gown, and to say hereafter he has been at the University. The first element of his knowledge is to be shown the colleges, and initiated in a tavern by the way, which hereafter he will learn of himself. The two marks of his seniority, is the bare velvet of his gown, and his proficiency at tennis, where when he can once play a set he is a fresh man no more. Of all things he endures not to be mistaken for a scholar;"

the "pretender to learning" who "has taken pains to be an ass" and

"talks much of Scaliger and Casaubon and the Jesuits and prefers some unheard-of Dutch name before them all. He is critical in a language he cannot conster and speaks seldom under Arminius in divinity. He never talks of anything but learning and learns all from talking."

These are pictures by a young fellow of Merton drawn from his contemporaries. It is indeed strange how quickly types vanish from the University and pass completely away, so that Merton College knows them no more!

What again could express more closely the spirit and intention of Walter de Merton than this description from the pen of his scholar born in a late age:—

"A grave divine is one that knows the burthen of his calling, and hath studied to make his shoulders sufficient; for which he hath not been hasty to launch forth of his port, the University, but expected the ballast of learning and the wind of opportunity. Divinity is not the beginning but the end of his studies; to which he takes the ordinary stair, and makes the arts his way. He counts it not profaneness to be polished with human reading, or to smooth his way by Aristotle to school-divinity. . . . In matters of ceremony he is not ceremonious, but thinks he owes that reverence to the church to bow his judgment to it, and make more conscience of schism than a surplice. His life is our religion's best apology."

So writes a Merton man for Merton men in the spirit of the Merton founder.

"Since Mr. Richard Hooker died none have lived whom God hath blest with more innocent wisdom, more sanctified learning, or a more pious peaceable primitive temper than he." *

Bishop Earle was laid to rest near the altar in the College Chapel in November 1665.

### Studies under Savile.

The Warden was a hard worker and expected the like in others.

"He was so sedulous at his study that his lady thereby thought herself neglected: and coming to him one day as he was in his study, saluted him thus: 'Sir Henry, I would I were a book too, and then you would a little more respect me.' Whereto one, standing by, replied, 'Madam, you must then be an Almanack, that he might change every year.' Whereat she was not a little displeased."†

In a like spirit of concentration he kept his scholars regularly engaged in disputations, for which stringent rules were devised. Questions of Divinity were frequently discussed, though the College seems to have played no prominent part in the Calvinist-Arminian controversy which was then raging through the University as through the country. But at least the scholars of Merton were well drilled within their own walls to know every aspect of the Roman controversy, and the Calvinist theories as well.‡ The Warden himself in 1604–5 was engaged with the Deans of Windsor and Winchester and others in the translation of the Gospels into English for the forthcoming authorised

* Wood, "Athenae," iii. 716–19.

† Peck. ap. Bliss, "Athenae," ii. 317.

‡ The Reg. for 1604–7 abounds with examples of such disputations.

version, and borrowed books from the College library for the purpose.

In two other cases Merton College under Savile rendered great and worthy service to the cause of learning and study in the University.

In 1597 Sir Thomas Bodley, fellow of Merton, founded the great University Library which bears his name. In this great task he received no help such as that given him both by Savile and by Merton College. The former gave many printed books and MSS; the latter not only timber for building but "38 volumes of singular good books in folio" to the value of some £40 or £50.* Thus zealously Merton College co-operated in the founding of the Bodleian.

But teaching and discussion must be added to books, however numerous. The wooded hills of Carrara may be rich with marble, but the young workman must be taught his quarrying. It is at the beginning of the seventeenth century that not a few of the present University professorships were founded. Theology had already in the early years of the preceding century been so endowed, and now new professorships in Moral Philosophy, Ancient History, and Natural History were established in the years 1618–1622 to bear the names of Whyte, Camden, and Sedley. Two other great subjects received similar recognition in 1619 in the founding by the Warden of Merton College of the two Savilian Professorships of Geometry and Astronomy. These studies needed encouragement at Oxford:

* Names in Reg. ii. 186–7. *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 267, 335, 920–1.

"The generality of people some years before did verily think that the most useful branches of Mathematicks were spells and her professors limbs of the Devil . . . and so it was that not a few of our then foolish gentry refused to send their sons thither lest they should be smutted with the black art."*

The Savilian professorships initiated a new era in the history of the study of mathematics in the University, and the early years of that era are inseparably associated with Merton College, and in Oxford with Merton College only. The Astronomy lecture was handed over by Savile to John Bainbridge, who held the office 23 years (1620–1643), and received from Merton the income of the senior Linacre lecturer. The Geometry lecture Savile at first took himself, giving his inaugural lecture in the Divinity school at 9 A.M. on Wednesday in Act week 1620 before a great University gathering. When at Christmas the old scholar himself resigned the task he sent first to London for Edmund Gunter, a Christ Church man, to take his place. Cambridge had given the Oxford Astronomy chair its first professor; Oxford should supply the Geometry.

"So [Mr. Gunter] came and brought with him his sector and quadrant, and fell to resolving of triangles and doeing a great many fine things. Said the grave knight, 'Do you call this reading of Geometrie? This is shewing of tricks, man!' and so dismisst him with scorne."†

So to Cambridge again Savile went after all, and fetched thence Henry Briggs to become commoner of Merton, and lecture on the first book of Euclid (Savile had left off at Prop. IX.) and three times a week on Arithmetic to the Merton scholars in the College Hall.‡

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 335.

† Aubrey, "Brief Lives," ii. 215, from Seth Ward, Bp. of Sarum. Savile was knighted 1604.

‡ Wood, "Annals," ii. 334–5.

With Henry Briggs, John Bainbridge, John Greaves, and Peter Turner, all at Merton, the College was at this time the chief home of mathematical studies in the University.

Savile, Earle, Bodley, Reynolds, Mason, Cuffe, John Hales, Regius Professor of Greek, Isaac Wake, Public Orator and Ambassador in Venice, Switzerland, and France, Henry Briggs, John Bainbridge, these are Mertonian names of the time, a time of facile scholarship, polished wit, and grave divinity. The "Savile set" has been roughly handled by perhaps the greatest Oxford scholar of the present century. Yet surely they served the University and the Nation, yes, and the learning of the time, honestly and zealously. Did they tend to display rather Baronian characteristics than the ever burrowing scholarship of a Casaubon? At least the brilliant Mertonians of the day not only adorned their University and served the Church and King, but many of their works have lived after them, to assist and promote to-day, not only their own ideals of scholarship and service, but also such ideals of learning as inspired the judgment of their great critic, the late Rector of Lincoln.

### Buildings and Bequests.

It was during Savile's Wardenship that the College buildings finally took the form which they present to-day, save for the still later rebuilding of the Hall and that most striking example of nineteenth-century architectural insight known as the New Building. In 1588–89 the front of the College from the Porter's Lodge to the Warden's House was entirely rebuilt, and in 1599 the front of S. Alban Hall. And on September 13,

1608, between 8 and 9 A.M., was laid the foundation stone of what remains to-day the most graceful exterior of any College quadrangle in Oxford—the present "Fellows' Quad." * The work was finished on September 28, 1610. Both at Oxford and Cambridge just at this time there was a great activity of building. At Oxford, Exeter in 1615, Oriel in 1620, University in 1624, were rebuilt. Wadham was founded in 1610–13, while second courts were added to Lincoln in 1612, S. John's in 1631, Jesus in 1640; also at Cambridge to S. John's in 1598–1602, Pembroke in 1610, and Trinity in 1612–14. But none of these buildings is more beautiful than the exterior of the new Merton quadrangle or Wadham College buildings which so closely resemble it.† The interior of the Merton court is not dissimilar to what are now the "Old Schools" of the University, and the same architects, Thos. Holt of York and John Acroyde of Halifax, were engaged on both. The Schools Quadrangle, to the building of which Merton College contributed, was in building 1613–1619.

Two considerable benefactions to the Postmasters were made in Savile's time. John Chamber, fellow in 1569, founded the Eton Postmasterships in 1604; and Thomas Jessop, fellow in 1560, gave moneys to double the allowances of these "poor scholars" in 1610, in fulfilment of a promise he had made in April 1596.‡

* *Cf.* Plate IV., showing part of the east exterior of Savile's building, and Plate VI. giving a general view of this.

† *Cf.* Reg.; Willis and Clark, iii. 276–280; Brodrick, "Memorials," p. 71, Note; and further Part ii.

‡ Hence the date 1595 given this benefaction by Wood, "History," p. 5. For these two benefactions see also Part. ii., chapter i.

### Royal Visits to Oxford.

Merton College had entertained Queen Katherine of Aragon in 1518, and in 1566 many of the royal suite when Queen Elizabeth paid her first visit to Oxford. While Savile was Warden, Royalty came twice again to the University, the Queen in September 1592, and King James in August 1605. On the first occasion the College bestirred itself to do honour to the guest. Thomas Savile, younger brother of the Warden, fellow of Merton in 1560, and Proctor in the year of the Queen's coming, rode out to welcome her in the name of the University at Godstow Bridge on September 22, and escorted her to Christ Church. Next day, Henry Savile presided at disputations held in the royal presence in S. Mary's Church, and at their end delivered a Latin oration closing with a panegyric on the Queen and her victory over the hosts of Spain and the Pope, which still rings out sonorously: "Tuis auspiciis Hispania Anglum non vidit nisi victorem, Anglia Hispanum nisi captivum."

> "Come the three corners of the world in arms,
> And we shall shock them."

On September 25 a great banquet was given in the College Hall to sixty of the Privy Council and the Court, among whom came Cecil the Treasurer and the French Ambassador. After dinner the Regius Professor of Greek, Henry Cuffe, fellow of Merton, and four other Mertonians, entertained the company with a philosophical debate, Thomas Savile concluding it with a speech in praise of Cecil, the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord High Admiral, and the Earl of Essex. "The

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Lords then went to sit in counsell" with the French Ambassador in the rooms of Jasper Colmer, fellow of the House.* Three days later Elizabeth left Oxford, delivering a parting speech in Latin to the University.† On Shotover the great Queen halted, and, "looking wistfully towards Oxford," bade her last farewell:

"Farewell, farewell, dear Oxford. God bless thee and increase thy sons in number, holiness, and virtue."‡

It was no lip-loyalty that the University paid to such a Queen.

### Sir Thomas Bodley.

On March 29, 1613, another great banquet was celebrated in the College Hall, but the occasion was less joyous. Sir Thomas Bodley had died in London on January 18, and his body, brought to Oxford to burial, was interred in Merton Chapel on March 29. The University assembled *en masse* to do him honour, and from his own College every fellow and postmaster, chaplain and servant, joined in the great funeral procession that swept through the streets of Oxford, returning to lay him to rest at the north-east corner of the Choir of the Chapel, and commemorate him afterwards, as his will directed, at the funeral banquet in the College Hall. He left a sum of money to the College to found a loan-chest for poor scholars, and this was in frequent use till just over fifty years ago. §

* Reg. and MS. account by Philip Stringer, O.H.S. viii. 249–261.

† Inserted in Reg. ii. p. 160, with slight variations from the text in MS. Bodl. Tanner, 461.

‡ Wood, "Annals," ii. 253.

§ Reg., also *cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii. 314; and *infra* p. 194–5.

### End of the "Golden Age."

Since 1596 Savile had governed Eton College as well as Merton. Warden of the latter for 36 years, he died at the former on February 19, 1622. On his great monument in Merton Chapel were sculptured pictures of the two Colleges he had ruled. And in the fierce storms which so soon after his death beat upon its walls, the older foundation looked back to his time of rule as the golden age in its history, and sorrowed after him who had been "Musarum patronus, Maecenas litterarum, fortunarumque Mertonensium vere Pater."

### Nathaniel Brent.

Twilight may last long before the coming of night. For sixteen years after Brent's election as Warden, the course of life in Merton College continued to run placidly. The new Warden was not unworthy his position. Postmaster in 1589 and Fellow in 1593, he was fitted to understand the Merton life as no alien imported from outside to rule the College could be. He had travelled in foreign parts, and run risks in Italy while collecting materials for a history in English of the Council of Trent. On his return he had married a niece of Archbishop Abbot. Not only, therefore, was he Protestant in sympathies, but he was likely to look with small favour on the rising school of thought represented by Laud. That he yielded to the latter's influence when he was all-powerful, both as Primate in the Country and Visitor to the College, is certain. Thus, in August 1637, he advised his scholars to bow towards the altar both on entering and leaving the choir. Neither could the utility of the Laudian reforms

of the next year be denied by one to whom the true interests of his College were dear. But when it became question no longer of greater reverence or increased discipline in the common life, but of choice to be made between Parliament and King, wherewith then was unhappily bound together the issue of Puritanism or Prelacy, Brent neither failed to know his mind, nor wavered in his resolution to stand by the Puritans. Passionate advocates hurled at him charges of inconsistency. Few in such times may escape such charges, or care to parry a weapon happily blunted in the too frequent using. Thus Brent became a "weathercock:"

"some that were his contemporaries in Merton College could have told the world upon inquiry that he was another Varro who could transact business for Pompey in Spain, but quickly unload himself of the fidelity he vowed as soon as he had intelligence that Cæsar was master of the field."*

But more in Merton College would have told the world upon inquiry that their Warden thought as did they, and not with the King in the great struggle. Brent chose his side when final choice was necessary, and clave to it stoutly like a man. "How could a gentleman satisfy himself to bear arms against his King?" As Sir Ralph Hopton against Edmund Ludlow, so well nigh the whole University of Oxford in passionate scorn hurled the taunt against the minority. But that minority, the Colleges of Merton and of Lincoln, might answer for themselves as did the Lieutenant-General of the horse in the army of the Commonwealth of England to his wondering opponent: "I told him that as I conceived the laws both of God and man did justify me in what I had done." It is ill

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 614, 615; so "Athenae," iii. 333–5. But of what value *is* this evidence?

work for an actor in the drama to go casting names abroad. That may be left to the playwright looking at the puppets of his play.

The quiet course of theological controversy in these sixteen years at Oxford was at times broken by various ills and visits from outside. The great plague of July 1625 drove all save the masters from the walls of Merton College. Parliament was to be moved from London to Oxford, and room therefore found for its members within the Colleges. Presently the evil was so increased that many of the masters fled, and those who stayed might not quit the College to go into the town without special leave, while spices were sent in to them from outside. Only in late November did the College re-assemble. Four years later King Charles and his Queen paid the first of their many visits to Merton.

On August 24, 1629, the French and Belgian Ambassadors with a large company of the nobles of England were richly feasted in the College "gallery"—probably some room in the Warden's house.* But yet a greater banquet was to follow. Their Warden had just been knighted by the King, and in his honour the College, on August 27, received the King and Queen as they were returning from Woodstock to Abingdon after mid-day. The feast ended, the King "viewed several parts of the College before leaving."† He should later know it well. Again on August 29, 1636, there came to Oxford for a two days visit the King, Queen, and the

* *Cf.* Brodrick, "Mem." p. 75, note. A "gallery" in the Warden's house is mentioned in 1790, though not in the inventory of furniture in the various rooms there in 1622.

† Reg. and Wood, "Annals," ii. 367.

two Princes, Rupert and the Elector Palatine. In their reception with banqueting and plays S. John's and Christ Church excelled, but it was Brent who presented the Princes for their Master's degrees.*

Of inner College history during these years not much can be said. The Library was increased in size in 1623 by the incorporation of a room at the East end.† The choir of the chapel was newly decorated and paved with marble in 1634–35. The house on the west of the entrance gate was built in 1631. The members of S. Alban Hall, were admitted to the ante-chapel during divine service in 1626. In the same year a house was purchased in Warwick Street, London, for the use of the Warden or any of the fellows who might have occasion to visit the city either on their own account or on that of the College. The Warden, in fact, as the affairs of the State grew yet more complex, paid many and long visits to the Capital.‡ Those whom religious hatred had driven from their own country still, as in the days of Bickley and Savile, found a ready welcome in Merton College. In 1633–4 help was given to a Bohemian and a Moravian minister and a French Abbot in exile "Evangelii causâ." And the College in March 1632 voted £14 towards the restoration of S. Paul's. Again, never in the history of the College since the days of Archbishop Chichele were there so many Fellows as in 1635–1638. The number of 35 then reached has not since been equalled, nor is it likely to be. In 1639 it drops on a sudden from

* At length in Wood, "Annals," ii. 407–413.

† See further, Part ii. cap. 3.

‡ This house was given up for another in 1632. In 1638 Laud confined the London accommodation to a mere lodging of two rooms.

33 to 23. This surprising decline was doubtless one of the effects of the great Laudian visitation which took place in the interval.

### The Laudian Visitation.

On the death of the Earl of Pembroke in 1630, William Laud, then Bishop of London, had been elected in his stead Chancellor of the University in preference to his opponent Philip, younger brother of the dead earl, who was nominee of the Calvinist party. Laud at once set his hand "to reforme the University, which was extremely sunk from all discipline and fallen into all licentiousness." Accordingly he commanded a weekly report to be sent him by the Vice-Chancellor of occurrences in the University, and encouraged also private correspondence. Two of such letter-writers are mentioned by name. These were William Chillingworth of Trinity and Peter Turner of Merton.* The latter, elected fellow in 1607, and inventor in 1629 of the new Proctorial cycle, led the Laudian party in the College for many years. During his Chancellorship Laud's influence in the University was supreme. The annals of the time are full of the deprivations and censures of preachers inclined to Puritanism. Not till 1641, the year after Laud's impeachment, did the Puritan party grow "very bold, preaching and discoursing what they list,"† and even then Francis Cheynell of Merton for an over bold Latin sermon was denied the grace for his degree of B.D. In 1638 at the height of his power Laud, now Archbishop, turned his attention to Merton College. To resist such a visitor was clearly futile, and, not only for this reason,

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 369. † *Ibid.* p. 424.

but also by cause of the very excellence of his injunctions, might have harmed the College. No active opposition was therefore offered either by Brent or any other. But the feeling generally entertained towards the Archbishop in the College is shown by the entry of November 6, 1641, written in a large bold hand prominently over other entries in the College Register : *

"Visitatio Mertonensis tres annos et dimidium nata, et quae Troianam obsidionem duratione minabatur, hac Die providentia Divina extinguitur : Visitatio omnium iniustissima et peior pessimâ."

Two days later the Commons were discussing the Grand Remonstrance. Opposition to the King's servants could now at last be boldly voiced, as in the Great Councils of the Realm, so in the quiet meeting of a little Oxford college.

Laud's visitors arrived at Merton on March 29, 1638. Every member of the College was called before them, and presented with thirty articles of inquiry. From their religious beliefs and intellectual proficiency to the smallest details of their daily life, of all such matters they should render each his complete account. Especially it should be sought whether there were in the College any "infamous or criminous" persons or

"any Papists or Romishly affected, Sectary or Refractory persons that conforme not to ye rites, orders, and ceremonies of ye Church of England."†

The inquisition was adjourned to the Archbishop's own care at Lambeth on October 4.‡ On October 19, he issued thence a code of thirty injunctions to which

* Wood, "Annals," ii. p. 346. † Twyne, iii. 619–621.

‡ Laud certainly did *not* "spend many weeks in the College" as Mr. Lee in the "Dict. Nat. Biog." asserts.

six additional clauses were later added in May 1639. On October 21, in the absence of both Warden and Sub-Warden, Laud's zealous partisan, Peter Turner, as senior fellow, read the injunctions to the fellows assembled after evening prayers in the Sacristy.

These injunctions range over a great field of operation. The financial administration of the College is most carefully regulated, as are the conditions of the tenure of a fellowship, and the duration of the office of Sub-Warden, now fixed at one year. Directions for Chapel services and divinity lectures were minute and some of their effects last to-day:

"The Warden, Fellows, and Schollars to be in their surplices and hoods on Sundays and Holy Days and the Vigills. And on all other days the Masters under two yeares standinge, Bachelours, and Schollers, to be in the morninge at prayers from the beginninge to the end, And to demeane themselves reverently in time of divine service and at the entrance and departure out of the Chapell. And the Principall & Comoners of Alban Hall to come into the Quire in Surplisses and Hoods,"

The ordinary parishioners were to have a fixed day set apart for their Communions. The Chaplains were to follow the rubric of the Book of Common Prayer. Every week divinity disputations were to be held, of course in Latin, and all Fellows were bound to take part in due order of rotation, those who might be absent being bound on pain of a fine of 10*s.* or 6*s.* 8*d.* to the Library to make good deficiencies on their return. This applied to all save such of the fellows, "as live constantly abroade as Domestique servants to any Nobleman or Bishop," and they were bound to such exercises when they came home again. Nor were any to fill such posts of attendants without express leave of the senior members of the College.

No Fellow or scholar might dine out of hall, nor sit at any table or place at table other than that allotted him, nor drink "double beare or ale." During dinner one of the scholars appointed by the senior Dean should read aloud a Chapter out of the Gospels in Latin.

Latin was indeed to be spoken at all times everywhere in College save at College meetings. No Master was to converse with Bachelors or scholars within the University save in the College Hall or Chapel. All were to live in College, and the gates should be fast locked at nine. After half-past nine none could enter without knocking up the Dean. The fellows too must dress soberly, in clerical habit, avoiding "colours, boots, cutt suites, large bands, &c."

Finally the Postmasters called for attention. They were not to pay for their commons on Fridays or Saturdays. If a fellow gave his vote at an election of a Postmaster for money, he should be expelled. And (an excellent rule for all time) "The Postmasters to be chosen Fellows before others *cæteris paribus*." The Archbishop seems however to have shunned any attempt to control the taste in dress of the Merton postmaster.

Such were Laud's injunctions to Merton College. In themselves they must remain a witness to the Archbishop's good sense and honest wisdom. They are on the whole unimpeachable, and likely to render the College more efficient and more orderly governed. But what was unwise, what caused and was bound to cause an ever growing irritation against him, was his perpetual interference in the details of College government for the "three and a half years." During that time the

Fellows seem truly to have lost all liberty of action. They dared take no measure without a reference to Laud for his consent. If any risked an independent step, at his elbow was the Archbishop's partisan ever ready to discover secret Puritanism, ever craving to denounce. It was intolerable. Brent faced the peril boldly, and even, "amid the silence of the Fellows," restored to his place one whom the Archbishop had deposed. True there was not much immediate peril as Laud was then in prison. But this was rank mutiny, and Peter Turner expressed his wrath and consternation at the earliest opportunity. Three years later he wrote concerning this to the King. It was an act "merely in despite and affront to my Lord of Canterbury, being then oppressed by the rebels." But Brent was impenitent. There was never love lost between himself and Laud, and as Laud speaks fiercely of him in his Diary,* so Brent was an active witness against Laud on the latter's trial. It was a quarrel which may well be forgotten. Thus when threatened in 1641, Brent boldly appealed to the High Court of Parliament. This appeal was in August. In October, he left the College for London. The time was come when all men must choose sides for King Charles or for the Army of the Parliament.

### King or Parliament.

The early months of the year 1642 were an anxious time in the University of Oxford, as in the country generally. Letters rained in from the King, whose appeal for money in July received ready response. In vain the Parliament answered with prohibitory letters,

* *Cf.* Laud's "Autobiography," ed. 1695, i. 55, 286, 308, 330, &c.

and demanded the surrender of the chief champions of the King, Prideaux, Rector of Exeter, Fell, Dean of Christ Church, Frewen, President of Magdalen, and Potter, Provost of Queen's. Troops of soldiers were constantly passing, it was said, hard by the city on their march to secure Banbury and Warwick for the Parliament, and masters and scholars rallied together in great numbers on August 18, to drill in Christ Church great Quadrangle, and make ready to defend the city. Four days later the King raised his standard at Nottingham. On August 28, Sir John Byron rode in at the head of about one hundred and fifty or two hundred troopers to secure Oxford for the King, and the scholars "closed with them and were joyful at their coming." On September 1, twenty-seven senior members of the University, with the Vice-Chancellor (Prideaux) and Proctors, formed themselves into what the scholars nicknamed a "Council of War," to arrange with Byron for the safety of the University. One Merton name only is found among the twenty-seven, that of Peter Turner.

But a strong Parliamentary force lay at Aylesbury, and the hearts of the Royalists in Oxford were uneasy. Nor was their cheerfulness recovered when they saw the citizens of Oxford hanging back, and looking gloomily on the Royalist fervour of the scholars. Oxford was a city divided against itself with danger threatening outside. It were idle to hope to hold the place with a few score troopers and some hundreds of University volunteers, however willing with their soldiering. On Sept. 10 Byron rode away. Some volunteers followed him, among whom was Peter Turner. A skirmish with the enemy's horse, however, at Stow-in-the-Wold ended

in the capture of the Mertonian warrior, and for some time in his prison at Northampton he was apt to meditate on the favourite Merton variation-theme: "An vita activa sit praestantior speculativâ."

Two days after Byron's departure Colonel Arthur Goodwin occupied the city on the Parliament's behalf, and Merton College was chosen to give him and other of his captains lodging. There was no violence. All the Colleges set their gates open, and the troopers wandered in and out, admiring the "idolatry of painted windows." On September 14 Lord Say arrived to take command, and next day Merton, with Corpus, Magdalen, and Christ Church were carefully disarmed. But both sides were massing their forces, and shortly after Lord Say led his troops away. A few "Popish" books and pictures had been burned, and Christ Church, having hidden its plate, for that reason was deprived of it. But the Parliamentarian leader kept his men well in hand, and departed peaceably, leaving not even a garrison behind him. Then on October 23 followed Edgehill fight.

### The King at Oxford.

On Oct. 29 the King marched to Oxford, for this

"was the only city of England that he could say was entirely at his devotion; where he was received by the University (to whom the integrity and fidelity of that place is to be imputed) with that joy and acclamation as Apollo should be by the Muses."*

Thus Oxford for nearly four years offered with enthusiasm a home to a great lost cause.

There on July 14, 1643, Charles was joined by Queen Henrietta Maria. He himself was lodged at Christ

* Clarendon.

Church, but the Queen held her Court in Merton. Ever since that year the room over the archway into the Fellows' quadrangle has been known as the "Queen's Chamber." From it a passage was constructed through Merton Hall and its vestibule, crossing the archway over "Patey's Quad." and descending to the sacristy, thence by a door (now blocked) into the Chapel, and so to the grove, and the Gardens of Corpus. Hence the private way was continued till it reached the royal apartments in Christ Church. Many many times must this route have been trodden by the Stuart monarch and his Queen. Chiefly it pleased him to pass the day within Merton College. There his nobles thronged round him; campaigns were debated, schemes devised, emissaries despatched. Thither came the captains of his troops, the lords of his Council, the envoys of his foes. Scarcely were it possible to pass beneath the archway without the thought of those days two centuries and a half ago and of the Royalists who thronged the quadrangles and rooms of Merton, when the Queen held Court there for that one excited year of her stay.* And meanwhile what of the University and Colleges? Nothing perhaps appeals more strongly to the fantastic imagination than a sudden change in use. To build temple fragments into ramparts, to beat plowshares into swords and pruning-hooks into spears, to create of a University a camp of arms and withal a Court of pleasurable delight, these are not of those "lightsome changes whereof fules are fond." So was it with Oxford:

> "Ubi iste post phaselus antea fuit
> Comata sylva."

* The Queen left Oxford April 17, 1644: the King finally on April 27, two years later.

Long luxuriant with the peaceful fruits of learning, the University now for a few brief years was set to ride the storm of war. "Tota Academia morbo castrensi afflicta" writes the Merton scribe. Little could be seen stirring in its streets save the pageantry of arms. Scholars, casting books away, hurried to drill in the College quadrangles. Two regiments were raised from gentlemen and scholars which did good service. The Oxonian rode out, to battle by some ford on the Cherwell, or to raid a hostile troop of horse making for Abingdon, to return dusty and wounded at evening, and find the first ladies and courtiers of the realm moving under the great trees in the meadows of Christ Church, a fair company in the light of the westering sun. As dusk fell, the brilliant company gathered in Christ Church or Merton Hall, feasting and talking on the great subjects of the day—the chances of war, the love of ladies, and the chivalry of arms. Then some light play acted by the scholars or piece of musick in some College chapel might wile away an hour. What room for books in such a throng? What might win applause in Oxford save polished courtesy and valiant deeds of war? On other days nothing might be heard save anxious rumours of some new disaster. "Humours changed with every accident." Nor could the attraction be on the scholars' side alone. It had been better for his cause had the King earlier quitted Oxford, declares Clarendon. But the Court, and especially the ladies, were loth to go.

Thus for over three years by Christ Church walks and Merton walls, in every street and garden of the city, philosophers and grave divines, doctors of every faculty, and studious dignitaries.

"jostled gay courtiers and gayer ladies. There has perhaps never existed so curious a spectacle as Oxford presented during the residence of the King at the time of the civil war." *

Ever shifting and changing moved the curious scene, circling as on a pivot round the walls of Christ Church and Merton, at the time when the King made his headquarters in Oxford.

### Brent and Harvey.

Like the other Colleges, Merton, in January 1643, had made contribution of its silver plate to the King, and its store had been weighed out at 79 lb. 11 oz. 10 dwts. This was but a poor contribution in comparison with those of Magdalen, All Souls, Queen's, Trinity, and Christ Church, though University, Lincoln, and Balliol, sent even less to the Royal Mint. It is certain that Merton contributed well-nigh its all, for few pieces of silver plate now in the College date back beyond the period of the Restoration. As has already been seen, Merton was one of the smaller Colleges, and it speaks perhaps not a little for the members of Merton and Lincoln that, undeterred by such superior wealth or numbers, they dared show their Puritan sympathies.

While Oxford, however, was the "Capital of the Cavaliers" such sympathies could scarcely evince themselves in any other than fugitive members. Of these the most conspicuous were two Mertonians, the Warden Brent, and Chillingworth's opponent, Francis Cheynell. The latter, with another Mertonian fellow, Edward Corbet, had incurred the censure of Laud's visitors in

* J. H. Shorthouse, "John Inglesant," pp. 95, 96: a brilliant portrayal of the time.

1638 for refusing to bow to the communion table.* Both staunch Presbyterians, they were men of busy influence in London during the civil war, and were out of the way. So, too, in person was Brent, but yet as Warden of the College he might suffer loss by deprivation. Disloyalty should at least be punished so far as the King's arm could reach.

On January 27, 1645, the Sub-Warden and Fellows received this letter from Christ Church:

To our right trustie and wel beloved, the Sub-Warden and Fellows of Merton College in Oxford.

"Charles R.,

"Trustie and welbeloved We greete you well. Whereas Sr. Nathaniel Brent, Knt., your Warden of Merton Colledge hath long since adhered and contributed to ye Rebelles now in Armes against us, and hath notoriously taken upon him the office of Judge Marshall or other Comission to that effect among them, and hath contemptuously refused to repaire to our Royall Person, and besides for almost these three years last past hath neglected his attendance and office of Wardenship, and during all this time or any part thereof he hath not expressed any Art of industrie or diligence either in respect of the governmt or discipline of ye said Colledge wh. by your statutes he ought to have done; and all this present continues still absent from the same, your Colledge standing in much need all this time of ye industrie care and diligence of a Warden, wh. as it is by notorietie of the fact well knowne, soe we also have been ascertained by three of you, the Fellows of the said Colledge, of this his absence and neglect:

"Our pleasure and Comand therefore is, to displace & put out, the said Sr Nathaniel Brent as a man unworthie and no longer capable of that imploymt from that his Wardenship, and from all right and interest therein, and from all benefitt and priviledge any way by him to be claimed hereafter of or by the same. And our further pleasure and comand is that you the Sub-Warden with such of the Fellows as are now present or can speedily be called together, without delay proceed to the election and nomination of three men (as your Custome hath been) unto us: One of which three thus electe and nominated We intend for the peace and good of your

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 435.

Colledge to appoint and constitute your Warden in the stead of the said Sr Nathaniel Brent. And soe wee bid you farewell. Given at our Court att Oxon. this 24th day of January 1644.*

"This is according to your Maities Comand.

"HERTFORDE."

But fourteen days before, the axe had ended the life of Archbishop Laud. Even in the vacancy of the See of Canterbury, however, it was very doubtful whether, even on petition of the Fellows, the visitatorial powers over Merton College devolved on the King. The question was at least open whether Charles had any right whatever to depose Brent of his own authority. It was hardly profitable, however, to raise the question of rights of the subject against the King under the circumstances at Oxford.

The Fellows met next day to nominate. "It was useless to summon absent members, for the roads were blocked on every side and the city hemmed round with the enemy." Under this plea the seven seniors were chosen to select the three candidates. Unluckily they failed hopelessly to agree among themselves. Peter Turner, having returned from his prison, maintained a spirited opposition against the royal pressure. This was exerted on behalf of William Harvey M.D. of Caius College, Cambridge, physician to the King, and attendant on him at Oxford. Turner stoutly resisted the imposition of an alien on the College by royal authority, and in the end, instead of three, as many as eight names were submitted to the King together with a long letter of protest against the whole proceedings

* *I.e.*, 1645, the year being always calculated from March to March.

from Turner. Nor was this all. The heads of Colleges it seems, with one consent, wrote also to Charles. While denying emphatically the truth of a rumour then being circulated that they were murmuring against the royal intention to make Harvey Warden of Merton, and while of course expressing full confidence in the wisdom of his Majesty's choice, yet none the less they begged to offer certain facts to his consideration. They prayed him to bear in mind

"That the discipline and exercise of this College hath been an example to the whole University, the effects whereof have been visible these 300 years in the sending forth of very many persons of eminent note and ability both into the Church and State; that divers men of eminent learning and worth are now living who have been bred up under that discipline; that the government of the College may more probably be rectified and restored by some that are or have been Fellows, who have affections and obligations to it and certain knowledge of it, than by any strangers tho' never so worthy. They therefore pray that the King may be pleased to appoint some fit and able man of that Society to be Governor, who may revive the good and exemplary Orders of it. Thus the whole University shall have cause to acknowledge this act of his Majesty's singular grace and favour."*

King Charles I. brushed away such appeals lightly. What though Oxford men had taken arms and suffered in his behalf? What though they prayed him to remember other persons' desires as well as his own? The old Cambridge physician, now 67 years of age, had served him long and deserved reward. Merton College should pay him that reward. Thus on April 9, 1645, for the second time the College was given the most renowned physician of the day for Warden. None will deny that the College is justly proud to number Harvey

* From Twyne iii. 623-625, who preserves this letter as a rough draft. Whether the fair copy was ever actually sent the King is not certain, though it must remain probable.

among its Wardens.* Whether this establishes Charles' claim to its peculiar thanks and regard is a nicer question.

"His Majestie . . . gave him the Wardenship . . . as a reward for his service, but the times suffered him not to receive or injoy any benefitt by it."†

On April 27, 1646, the King fled, disguised as a servant, from Oxford. Two months later, on June 24, the city sullenly surrendered to Fairfax. Since March 24 the Merton Register of events had preserved a significant silence. On October 19 it breaks it once more:

"By the goodness of God the Civil War, which for many years past had vext Britain, ended, the Warden and most fellows returned to the College."

Harvey had retired to London. The year of his Wardenship was as completely ignored as ever the rule of Cromwell by the flatterers of Charles II. "In the twenty-fifth year of his Wardenship" Sir Nathaniel Brent came back to Merton College.

### The Visitation by the Parliament.

It had so chanced by the force of events that the principle of episcopacy through the years of civil war had seemed bound up with that of monarchy, and the victorious Presbyterians were not unwilling to believe the association as essential to the former as they denied it to be essential to the latter. Oxford University had been the central hearth and home of both principles.

* Abraham Cowley the poet was Harvey's close friend at Cambridge and with him was incorporated at Oxford. I suppose (apart from its discovery in Merton and any artistic excellences it may possess) it is this which justifies the hanging of his portrait in the Senior Common Room.

† Aubrey, "Brief Lives," i. 301.

One was now, in the eyes of the Parliament, discredited: the other was faltering. The one had been driven from open defiance in Oxford when Fairfax entered the city. The other should be expelled, and, if persuasion failed, by force. And so ready were the Oxonian Royalists to grant the inseparability of the association, that when later the Independents sought to divorce the two their efforts were hopeless. To submit to the authority of Parliament meant for Oxonians the denial of Church as well as of King. And those who clave to either could not see submission was possible. Not Cromwell, it seems, could make them recognise that they might yet be loyal to the doctrines and the principles of government of the Church of England, and at the same time admit the suzerainty of Parliament, or even accept a republican form of government.

Hence, almost despite the will of the leaders of the Parliament, things must needs at first fare but ill with the University of Oxford under their rule. Men who hold principles firmly, and have carried those principles to victory in the strength of their faith, cannot but believe that they need but quiet consideration to conquer the hearts and minds of others whose eyes were darkened and their ears dulled only by the smoke and roar of battle. Therefore at first the Parliament acted quietly towards its foe the University, and hoped its hostility might be converted by preaching or persuasion. Seven leading Presbyterian ministers were commissioned on September 10, 1646, to proceed to Oxford to win the stubborn by persuasive exhortation. Of these seven no less than three were fellows of Merton, viz., Edward Reynolds, Francis Cheynell, and Edward Corbet. Their efforts, however, never very likely to succeed in con-

verting the impenitent University, were further marred by the zeal their preaching kindled among the Independents in Oxford also to testify and deliver the pure word of God to the benighted Prelatists. The din of tongues waxed furious. But for Cheynell, it had gone hard with the Presbyterians, for they would have been ousted from the delivery of their message by the superior vigour and numbers of the rival exhortants. Cheynell, however, "outvied their zeal with greater heat." So they battled for the glory of conversion, and the "prelatist" in the malignancy of his heart looked on with sardonic appreciation. The first campaign, despite Mertonian efforts, was a failure.

On May 1, 1647, the second opened, when the Parliament passed its Ordinance "for the Visitation and Reformation of the University of Oxford and the severall Colleges and Halls therein," and appointed 24 Visitors to proceed to the University. And Merton College plays a yet more prominent part in the second campaign than in the first. Head of the whole Commission was chosen Sir Nathaniel Brent. Reynolds, Corbet, and Cheynell were members. Fourteen of the board were laymen and of small account. Thus of the seven present University members four were Mertonians. During the Visitation the Board governed the University, subject only to appeal to a London Committee of 78 members under the chairmanship of Francis Rous. All the ordinary machinery of government was stopped. Save for the quarrelling between the London and Oxford Committees, the latter had a free hand. When it is remembered that five of the Visitors formed a quorum, it is hardly too much to say that during the years of visitation 1648–1652, Merton College governed the University.

"It is impossible tc estimate too highly the importance of Merton to the Visitors at the outset of their difficult task, for they had little support elsewhere. Their President was its Warden; the high offices he had held in the state had given him influence in the College; the ablest men in the new government were drawn from its fellows; a large proportion of those cited naturally submitted. Merton was thus one of the few Colleges which obtained self-government at an early date.* Only Lincoln besides went heartily from the very beginning with the Visitors and the Parliament."†

Two other Mertonians, both Fellows, acted as delegates to the Visitors in 1647, viz., Edward Copley and Ralph Button.

But for well nigh a year nothing came of the Commission. The opposition in Oxford headed by Dean Fell was persistent, and the Visitors themselves were not vigorously supported from London, where the Presbyterians' struggle with Cromwell and the Independents absorbed all men's energies. Brent was absent from Oxford till August 1647, and again from December to March. Even in Merton the Visitors met with some opposition shown by a little band of Merton Royalists, and John French (Fellow 1615), Registrar of the University, refused to submit his books to the Visitors' inspection. The sword hung suspended ten months before falling. But finally the campaign was resumed and with vigour. On February 18, 1648, in place of the former Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, deposed from office, Laud's old rival Philip, Earl of Pembroke, the new Chancellor, appointed Edward Reynolds of Merton Vice-Chancellor, and to be Proctors, Ralph Button of Merton, and Robert Crosse of Lincoln. On March 17 the Visitors, now at last assisted by University authori-

* By September 1653. The others were Exeter, Ch. Ch., Wadham, Trinity.

† Burrows, Register of Visitors, p. cix.

ties, began operations in earnest, and the new Chancellor himself paid a hurried visit to Oxford in April to lend them his support. Reynolds too, though a Presbyterian, still had little opposition to fear from the London Independents. Both parties had at least combined to purge the University. And surely it was time. Study and learning, good order and discipline, all had gone necessarily to rack and ruin during the civil wars and during the King's presence in Oxford. Nor could there be hope of a revival while Oxford held out stubbornly against every order from London. The University must in its own interests be made to submit. The treatment it had experienced had been merciful. Now, if need be, it should be stern. The Parliament must know that its orders would be obeyed. Every master, bachelor, scholar, servant, in the University was called before the Visitors and asked to give a plain answer to the one simple question, "Do you submit to the authority of Parliament in this present Visitation?" No question, if questioning there must be, could well trench less upon the bitter ground of controversy. No religious test was imposed; no mention made of the King or of the War. Yet the great majority in the University felt, and felt with justice, that to submit was to play the craven both to Church and to King. It was bound so to befall, now that the bewilderment of war was past and the victor claimed submission. Evasion was of no avail. Those who refused their simple "yes," or some more circuitous equivalent, were bidden leave the University. If they refused, a little squad of Roundhead troopers compelled obedience.

There comes a time when strength must be used, and the scruples of mercy are but folly. However great the

sympathy may be with the victims, however much held in detestation, if it so chance, the principles of the victors, it cannot well be denied that, if the University of Oxford was once more to serve the cause of learning, if it was to recover from that most miserable condition to which royal patronage had reduced it, nay more, if it was to avoid yet greater perils, it was well done of the Visitors to act strongly, to act sternly; it was well done of the Mertonians not to shrink from using force; it was well done of Cromwell to command such resolution. For what might threaten else? What might be hoped if such magnificent fury as a Milton's were let loose upon the University? How large a party was there not, eager to "cashier and cut away from the public body the noisome and diseased tumour of prelacy," utterly scornful of those "who come furnished with no more experience than they learnt between the cook and the manciple, or more profoundly at the College audit; who sail in all their lawn and sarcenet, their shrouds and tackle, with a geometrical rhomboides upon their heads!" What did such find in Universities but the "scholastic grossness of barbarous ages," where the youth of the nation "tossed and turmoiled with their unballasted wits in fathomless and unquiet deeps of controversy" misspent their time? Such the message that inspired the Puritan enthusiast, whether he gazed on the Cathedral of S. Paul's or the towers of Oxford:

"Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly and all that is therein. And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof and shall burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit for the Lord thy God: and it shall be an heap for ever; it shall not be built again. And there shall cleave nought of the cursed thing to thine hand."

These men had their ideal of education for the young student; these men fashioned plans wherewith to

"lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men, and worthy patriots, dear to God and famous to all ages."

Could bitterer sarcasm be heaped on the late years of the life of Oxford by the party of the Puritans than to range over against them Milton's dream? It was time that the University should be treated with grim strength, lest a worse thing might befall it. Therefore Cromwell employed his Puritans of Merton.

From May 2, 1648, when Magdalen was the first College cited, every College sent its members in unceasing stream to make their way to the Warden's dining-room in Merton, or to the room over the gateway, and give answer to the Visitors there assembled. On May 12 the Mertonians were cited to appear, when, as was natural in Brent's own College, the majority at once submitted. Three Fellows gave a direct refusal, and of evasive answers there were not a few. Anthony Wood, then Postmaster, who could not see in the Visitation anything but the "ruin of the University," whose eldest brother, Thomas, had fought for the King, tells the tale of his interview with the Visitors:

"When A. W. was called in . . . he gave this answer: 'I do not understand the business, and therefore I am not able to give a direct answer.' Afterwards his mother and brother Edward,* who advised him to submit in plaine terms, were exceeding angry with him, and told him that he had ruined himself and must therefore go a begging. At length, by the intercession of his mother made to Sir Nathaniel Brent (who usually cal'd her his little daughter, for he

* Admitted Fellow of Merton this same year by the Visitors.

knew her, and us'd to set her on his knee when she was a girl . . .) he was conniv'd at and kept in his place, otherwise he had infallibly gone to the pot."*

There is no doubt that Brent did his best for the members of his own College. Thus, when on January 16, 1651, the twelve Postmasters were all expelled by the Visitors, as having been recently elected in disregard of an order by Parliament, the Warden exerted himself on their behalf, and, appealing to the London Committee, secured the restoration of several "who were godly youths." To Anthony Wood in the interim he had shown the additional kindness of advancing him from the position of Postmaster to the then more profitable place of Bible Clerk in April 1650. This, in view of the event of January 1651, was doubly fortunate, for, "had A. W. continued Postmaster a little longer he had without doubt received his quietus."†

The boy's passions ran away with his gratitude, for he can never speak well of his Warden. And even though he might abhor all Puritan principles, he had better have left the task of railing against Brent to others who owed him less.

Merton College thus lost some of its members during the Visitation. But nothing shows more clearly how deeply Puritanism had coloured the life of this College than a comparison of its lot with that of others. By this it becomes at once clear how utterly out of sympathy Merton as a whole was with other Colleges, how it was the home and strength of the Puritans in Oxford.‡

* "Life and Times," i. 144. In the Visitors' Register Wood appears as "Andrew Woodley."

† Wood, "Life," i. 166; "Annals," ii. 637.

‡ At the same time the centre of the Royalist movement and the

In 1648 there submitted in Merton thirty-seven, and were expelled seven. Only two other Colleges of those tested this year show a majority for submission—viz., Trinity (20 : 16) and University (6 : 4)—*i.e.*, but a bare one. Side by side with these may be set the three Colleges most zealous for the King—viz., New College (5 : 63), S. John's (7 : 36), and Corpus (3 : 32), while in many others a large majority was expelled. The Visitation lasted till April 8, 1658, and its centre of operations shifted from Merton in 1652, when Owen, new Dean of Christ Church, superseded Reynolds as Vice-Chancellor, and Cromwell's Chancellorship of the University quickly followed in 1653. Finally, in Conant's Vice-Chancellorship Exeter became the chief seat of the Visitation in its last years.

But throughout these ten years, 1648–1658, Merton College maintained its superiority over all others in the proportion of Puritans to disaffected, as the following table shows:

| | Submitted | Expelled |
|---|---|---|
| Merton | 37 | 15 |
| Queen's | 34 | 20 |
| Pembroke | 22 | 12 |
| Lincoln | 24 | 16 |
| Exeter | 27 | 19 |
| Trinity | 26 | 19 |
| Balliol | 19 | 16 |
| *Compared with:* | | |
| S John's | 16 | 39 |
| Corpus | 12 | 40 |
| New College | 15 | 62 |
| Magdalen | 24 | 78 |

hope of the Church of England at Paris till the Restoration was a Mertonian, Sir Richard Browne, Fellow 1624, Royal Ambassador for nineteen years, 1641–1660, father-in-law of John Evelyn.

In all the other Colleges more were expelled than submitted, save in Oriel, where numbers were equally divided. The whole number of expulsions was to the number of submissions as 10 : 9. Of sixteen heads of houses in 1648 ten refused compliance, and Francis Cheynell was promoted to one of the vacant places as President of S. John's.

Excluding the twelve Postmasters deprived in 1651, who may scarcely be counted in this connection, Merton lost six Fellows, three Postmasters, three Commoners, and three whose rank is uncertain. The six Fellows were William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia under Charles II., 1660–1676; Francis Broad; John Greaves, Savilian Professor of Astronomy, a most notable linguist and orientalist, who as Sub-Warden had carried through Harvey's election in 1645; John Lee, who as Vicar of S. Peter's-in-the-East had persisted longest in the reading of the Common Prayer in Oxford; William Owen, and Peter Turner, Savilian Professor of Astronomy and an old acquaintance. Nicholas Howson was expelled in 1649 but re-admitted. Two Fellows were also deprived, not for refusal of submission, but as of ill life and incorrigible. These were Roger Brent, and John French, the Registrar. Perhaps in the latter case his anti-Puritan sympathies assisted to cause his expulsion, but the former was no great loss.

Certain disturbances in College were promptly checked. In August 1648 the few Cavaliers left in Oxford plotted to seize the garrison and the Visitors and march to relieve Colchester. Francis Croft, Chaplain of Merton, "a high-flowne cavalier and a boon-companion," was deeply implicated. On failure of the plot he fled, and the soldiers searched his rooms in Merton, but "found

the bird flown." Four Fellows for drinking suspicious healths in Hall, on November 6, 1648, were warned and lost their commons. It being Gaudy day, they had drunk the King's health "with a Tertiavit standing bare." On January 22, 1651, Edward Wood was suspended from his tutorship for

"entertaining strangers at his chamber with more wine than twas thought convenient and for drinking the King's health at Medley two years before."

His younger brother not unnaturally cannot find epithets enough for the junior Fellow, Thomas Franke, who denounced him,

"who now did lay in wait, as 'twere, to bring the said College into distraction and trouble . . , a most vile person and not fit to live in a Society."

Which was exactly what the Visitors and Warden said of some of Anthony's "high-flowne cavaliers and boon-companions."

On the whole Merton College suffered very little from the Visitors. The places of those who were deprived were speedily filled up, but not, as at Lincoln, with the "dregs of the other University." The new comers were at least not less likely to be sober and temperate, men of reverence and learning, than the extruded Cavaliers. In October 1648, six were appointed by the Visitors and approved by the Warden and Fellows. Eleven more were named in December 1649. Against this Brent protested to the London Committee on behalf of the finances of the College, but with no great success. Six at least of these came in 1650, and three in 1651. The College under the government of the Visitors had not decreased in

numbers, nor, I should imagine, suffered in good order and discipline.

On November 27, 1651, Sir Nathaniel Brent, the "Arch-Visitor" as Anthony Wood loves to call him, resigned his Wardenship. He had governed his College "for nearly thirty years with the greatest loyalty and care." The eulogy of the Register is perhaps more justified than the vituperations of the Merton Postmaster. Perhaps he may be forgiven even for accepting the offer of the College, and using the hangings that once had bedecked the east end of the Chapel (but then were lying as loose lumber in the Sacristy) to adorn the "Queen's Chamber." * He died in London on November 6, 1652.

### Jonathan Goddard.

On December 9, 1651, there came to Merton College Dr. Jonathan Goddard, once a Commoner of Magdalen Hall, and now physician to Cromwell, and presented the letter of the London "Committee for the Reformation of the University" nominating him Warden in Brent's room. Just as in the country, after the "crowning mercy" of Worcester fight in this year, the triumph of Oliver and the Independents at the expense of the Presbyterians was secured, so it was at Oxford.

"Which two parties did in some respects make a faction in the University and when occasion served they would both joyne against the Royallists whom they stiled 'the common enimy.'

"The former of these (the Presbyterians), with their disciples, seemed to be very severe in their course of life, manners or conversation, and habit or apparell; of a Scoth (*sic*) habit, but especially those that were preachers. The other (the Independents) more free,

* Reg., December 26, 1646. Wood, "Annals," ii. 615, as usual makes the most of this.

gay, and (with a reserve) frollicksome; of a gay habit, whether preachers or not. But both, void of publick and generous spirits.

"The former, for the most part, preached nothing but damnation: the other not, but rather for libertie. Yet both joyne togeather to plucke downe and silence the prelaticall preachers, or at least expose their way to scorne." *

A great and a serviceable shibboleth is this "Libertie." It should be preached within the ranks of the victors, whether Independents or Presbyterians, but the vanquished Episcopalians should have no joy of it. The common foe was silenced, and the struggle between the two sects supervened.

Brent, Reynolds, Cheynell, all were eager Presbyterians. Goddard was champion of Independency. Like Wardens Chambers and Harvey before him Clayton, Lydall, Martin, and Wyntle after him, he was Doctor of Medicine.

"The Royal Society . . . made him their drudge, for when any curious experiment was to be donne, they would lay the task on him. An admirable chymist: he had three or fower medicines wherwith he did all his cures." †

The privilege of sending burgesses to Parliament had been first granted the University in 1604. As Oxford's first choice then had been of a Mertonian, Sir Thomas Crompton, so in 1653 Cromwell named Goddard the one burgess member for Oxford to sit in that "Little" "Nominated," or "Barebones'" Parliament,‡ which he hoped would at least prove no mere "Sanhedrim of pious fanatics." § Goddard was also one of the twelve members appointed on the third Parliamentary Commission to Oxford in the next year.

* Wood, "Life," i. 148. † Aubrey, "Brief Lives," i. 268.
‡ Sir Isaac Wake the Mertonian had also been burgess in 1624.
§ Gardiner.

The nine years of his Wardenship were for the College, as for Oxford generally, uneventful. The "Common Prayer and Sacraments in the Chapel were put downe."* Learning began once more to flourish. On December 7, 1653, the Visitors published an order that their recent injunctions to members of all Colleges to strictly perform their University exercises must be diligently observed in Merton. They had, it seems, discovered a "grace of exemption" bestowed there.

It was always a custom at Merton to allow a Fellow to proceed abroad for study or service to the nation,† and the Commonwealth made no difference in this respect. Its Fellows travelled in France and Italy in 1655 and 1659, and in August 1657 a Fellow was sent to Ireland at the special request of Cromwell's son Henry, then Chancellor of Dublin University, he being wanted "both for ecclesiastical and civil employments, as there is a paucity of scholars in Ireland." Neither does any period in the annals of Merton show a more steady regularity in the practice of philosophic discussions, or a greater devotion to Aristotle. But as Richard Franklyn, Fellow, maintained in 1653, despite the Stageirite's authority, "Sapienti nihil aut non multum scribendum," so the temper of the time at Oxford lent itself rather to sober life and grave learning than to the production of great works. But at least the books of the Society should be well guarded. In 1651 all debts to the Library were carefully guaranteed, and in 1658 for the first time a Librarian was appointed, at a stipend of 3*s*.

* Wood, "Life," i. 162.

† *E.g.*, Savile in France (1578–82), Bodley "in foreign parts" (1576–9), and other fellows in Italy (1575, 1647), Holland (1633), France (1646), Portugal (1709, 1734), Syria (1678), &c.

a week.* The life at Merton was now again a quiet life of ordered study. For recreation her sons went fishing to Wheatley Bridge, and nutted in Shotover by the way. Or they gathered together to play chamber music, "Anthony Wood the fiddle and Edmund Gregorie the bass viol," while "George Mason of Trinity played on another wyer instrument but could do nothing." So they wandered forth, a merry Undergraduate party of five, playing in sport for pennies as far as Faringdon.† Different indeed the life in Merton, where but a few years past her quadrangles had echoed the loud laugh of swaggering roysterers, clash of arms, or rustle of sweeping trains. Naïve indeed was the astonishment of the Cavaliers on their return to find Oxford more truly a place of learning, religion, and education than ever they themselves had known it, spite of (or by reason of) their own expulsion :

"It might reasonably be concluded that this wild and barbarous depopulation would even extirpate all that learning, religion, and loyalty, which had so eminently flourished there, and that the exceeding ill husbandry and unskilled cultivation would have made it fruitful only in ignorance, profanation, atheism, and rebellion; but, by God's wonderful blessing, the goodness and richness of that soil could not be made barren by all the stupidity and negligence. It choked the weeds and would not suffer the poisonous seeds, which were sown with industry enough, to spring up; but after several tyrannical governments, mutually succeeding each other, and with the same malice and perverseness endeavouring to extinguish all good literature and allegiance, it yielded a harvest of extraordinary good and sound knowledge in all parts of learning; and many who were wickedly introduced applied themselves to the study of good learning and the practice of virtue, and had inclination to that duty and obedience they had never been taught; so that when it pleased God to bring the King back to his throne, he found that University abounding in excellent learning, and devoted to duty and obedience,

* This was John Wilton, not a Fellow, but Chaplain.

† *Cf.* Wood, "Life," i. 176, 190.

little inferior to what it was before its desolation; which was a lively instance of God's mercy, and purpose for ever so to provide for his Church, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it; which were never opened wider, nor with more malice, than in that time." *

It is truly a reasonable conclusion that God's mercy can bring forth wheat where the seeds of tares alone are sown. Which planted better in the garden of the University, the Puritans of Merton or the Cavaliers?

May 8, 1660, the King came to his own again. On June 20 Common Prayer was read again in Merton Chapel. On July 7, ignoring all events since Brent's death, as if this alone created the need, Charles wrote and named Edward Reynolds Warden, claiming the right in the vacancy of the See of Canterbury. After a little protest, and slight concessions to due form and order on the King's part, Reynolds was admitted Warden on August 4. Goddard retired to Gresham College. It was time now for the Cavaliers again to show what were the fruits of *their* husbandry in the University.

[*Note:* The authorities for this chapter are the College Register and Archives mainly for Savile and Brent to 1646; for the Civil War also Wood; and for the Parliamentary Visitation, Burrows' "Worthies of All Souls'," and "Register of the Visitors of the University of Oxford, 1647–1658," *passim*, besides Wood, "Life and Times," vol. i., and "Annals," ii. pp. 500 *sq. passim*. Throughout I have made reference to Clarendon, and to the history of the period by Mr. S. R. Gardiner, Fellow of Merton College, which of course is indispensable. So closely is Merton connected as a College and in her sons both with the King's stay at Oxford and the rule of the Parliament that I have deemed it only right to dwell on this period at some length.]

* Clarendon.

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# CHAPTER V

## PEACE AFTER STORM (1660–1898)

The new Warden had been known to the College nearly half a century. Postmaster in 1615, Fellow in 1620, which place he won by skill in the Greek tongue, he was long the "pride and glory of the Presbyterian party." After Cromwell's death, as the leading divine in London, he exerted himself to bring back the King, as, indeed, he had always refused to recognise the Government after 1649, and had lost his place as Visitor to the University in consequence. The Restoration was owing in no small measure to his zeal, though his attempts to secure from Charles more favourable terms for the Presbyterians at the Savoy Conference in 1661 failed. He himself, like so many men of the time, was weary of the then arid wastes of Protestant controversy, neither believed in the Nonconformist assurance that the one Church government of divine institution was that which was no government at all. The nation was tired of militant and triumphant Nonconformity, whose essence was opposition, and in moderate Episcopacy found its surest hopes of good government, quiet, religious devotion, and peace. Charles rewarded Reynolds for his services first with a royal chaplaincy, then with the Wardenship of Merton, and finally in January 1661 with the Bishopric

of Norwich. As is usual in such cases, motives of self-interest were promptly imputed:

"'Tis no wonder. Money and Reformation go commonly hand in hand, and if a covetous and insatiable wife thinks fit, preferments and oaths, let them be what they will, must be taken and so pride bolstered up on a ruined conscience." *

Reynolds himself was a man of such a sweet and humble temper that even his critic had to divide the responsibility of his conformity. His wife, too—and this is not unlikely—is said to have hindered his proposed benefactions to the College, and this did not propitiate the Merton historian. For his conformity, it is clear that unless the Church were to be abandoned to the extremer party, and the old most weary struggle renewed, men like Reynolds did true service both to nation and to Church, in choosing "conformity as the lesser of two evils." Driven by Laud's Arminian crusade into Nonconformity, yet never even so "carrying politics into the pulpit," he had at last opportunity to show to both his own College and the country, that the Church of England henceforth should gather men of different tempers within her broad boundaries, and that Protestant and Catholic, owning her like allegiance, should work side by side together.†

### Sir Thomas Clayton.

Very different was the man who succeeded him as Warden, like Reynolds alone in this—that he too had a wife who runs the gauntlet of Merton criticism, and emerges still the worse for fierce reproach.

The Fellows of Merton having, it seems, some pre-

* *Cf.* Wood, "Annals," ii, 615, 616. "Athenæ," iii. 1083–5.
† *Cf.* Burrows. Register, xxxv.–xxxviii.

monitions of disaster, led by Alexander Fisher their Sub-Warden, copied their ancestors' defiance of a century ago, barred the College gates, and refused admittance to Archbishop Juxon's nominee, Thomas Clayton, however great and distinguished the company which escorted him to the entrance. Clayton was a Pembroke man, professor of medicine in the University under the Commonwealth, who had "gone over" on the King's return. "Were there no Mertonians, were there no loyalists—Sir Richard Browne for instance—to take Reynolds' place as Warden?" men asked indignantly. Clayton's reputation was a smirched one. However great the exaggeration and personal pique of the writer, yet a man described as

"a most impudent and rude fellow; the very lol-pop of the University; the common subject of every lampoon in the University; a fellow of little or no religion, only for forme-sake; a most lascivious person," &c. &c.,

must needs give his accuser the lie by his life and conduct. And this is just what Clayton in his thirty-two years' government of Merton College seems not to have done.

The Archbishop had appointed Clayton, it was said, under unfair outside pressure. So the Fellows made a stout resistance of over a month. Although through the action of a traitor in the camp, one Dr. Thomas Jones, the new Warden forced his way into the College Chapel by means of the key of the College stable, yet still the Sub-Warden with a strong garrison of Fellows guarded the proper keys in his room, and refused to deliver them. Nor would the useful stable key open the door even of the Warden's lodgings. Therefore, after being seated by Jones in the Warden's place in Chapel, Clayton made no further progress, but retired

in some discomfiture. A week after, he reappeared. But having, with perhaps greater confidence than strategic wisdom, previously announced an intention to employ force, he found the College gate close barred, the Sub-Warden in command, and a strong detachment of bachelor Fellows thrown into the Warden's House. This struck terror into Clayton's boldest men of valour, and the assault was abandoned in favour of a blockade. For three weeks the garrison held out stoutly. But there seemed to be no hope of relief from outside. "They could have neither right nor law for their money." The commandant's heart failed him, and the College capitulated. On May 6 Sir Thomas Clayton marched in, and victors and vanquished rejoiced themselves with "a short banquet at the College charge." After which the garrison went to prayers, and the conqueror, having delivered his harangue, was left in proud possession.*

It was clearly expedient to forget this unfortunate struggle by means if possible of good fellowship. Here, too, the growth of the well-being of the community should be speeded by the introduction of luxury. Four feast days in the year were appointed in October 1661—viz., Christmas Day, Easter Day, Pentecost, and August 1—the day which from the earliest times marked the beginning of the College year. The Postmasters should have their share in the rejoicing, and fared, indeed, even better than the Fellows. For while the latter were to contribute from their private purse each 2*s.* 6*d.* to the cost of a feast, it was the Bursar added the 5*s.* to increase the cheer of the Postmasters' table. But the College plate was sorely lacking. In 1661,

* Wood, "Life," i. 389–394. The Register's account is duly vague and indefinite.

therefore, it was ordered that the poorer class of Commoners should be straitly discouraged from coming to the College. But the richer might be admitted if within two months of his admission each presented the College with a silver cup of value not less than £8. His only alternative, which is put behind in the second place, was to pay £6 in cash down to the Library. As presumably his father would provide the one, and he himself the other, the College plate grew rapidly, and many of the Commoners' cups of the time are kept to-day.

In October 1661 again Merton led the way in Oxford in being the first College to provide its Fellows with a Common Room. The room over the kitchen with the "cock-loft" over it was turned "in communem usum Sociorum," and a man hired at a shilling a week to keep it in order.* Cambridge, it is true, had set the example of luxury, for Trinity had there boasted its Combination Room in 1650. Oxford sternly refrained till Merton set the example in 1661. Lincoln followed suit in the next year, and Trinity in 1665. To Merton, however, belongs the credit in Oxford of the innovation.†

The College, in fact, on the fall of the Puritan *régime*, set to work to enjoy itself. The Undergraduates resumed their warfare with the "Oppidani" unchecked by their tutors, to the great discontent of the Vice-Chancellor. The College, however, when it received his complaint, merely inserted an "obiter dictum"

* In 1722, £3 per annum.

† Willis and Clarke, iii. p. 380, ascribe to Merton a Common Room under Harvey. This is simply a misunderstanding on their part of Gutch, who mentions a "combination room" given by Harvey "to the College," but the College is *not* Merton College, but the College of Physicians in London.

in its Register that "Never had College produced so many eminent examples of piety as had Merton—'quod bono vertat Mertonensibus'"—and went on its way rejoicing. Truly "to study was Fanaticism."* One small incident may show the temper of those merry times:

"Sept. 29, 1662. Being Michaelmas Day severall schollers went to steale geese at Wulgercote; but being discovered they were pursued: and in the pursuit one scholler was thrust in the arme with a prong, another taken. He that was taken they had to Wulvercote and set him in the stocks in his gowne; but the rest, rallying up forces to the number of 40, came and rescued the man, broke all the windows in Wulvercote, and took a goose and stuck him on the end of a long staff, and soe marched through the town and home in triumph."†

In this same year Merton scarcely maintained its claim to be first of the three Puritan Colleges. When the Act of Uniformity sent Nonconformists into exile from the University, Exeter and Lincoln lost many of their Fellows: Merton, it seems, not one.

### The Royal Visits.

News that the great Plague had broken out in London reached the College on May 13, 1665. In September, King Charles with his Queen, Katherine of Braganza, and his Court, came fleeing from the peril to Oxford. All under the rank of Master were promptly evicted from their rooms in Merton and sent to their homes, and from September 26 to February 16, 1666, the Queen took up her abode in the College. Her servants were lodged in various rooms and even in the Hall. Frances Stuart, her maid of honour, afterwards Duchess of Richmond, appropriated Alexander Fisher's rooms in the Fellows' quadrangle, and the Countess of

* "The Guardian's Instruction" (1688), p. 40.

† Wood, "Life," i. 457.

Castlemayne another set. Again courtiers filled Merton instead of scholars, and children were born within its walls.*

As the cause of the second Stuart visit to Merton was not heroic, so itself was distressful, rather soiling than increasing the honour of the College. It was small wonder that "libels" should be pinned up on the doors in Merton, wherein lived the ladies of Charles II.'s Court. Founder's prayers on October 17 must needs be recited in English, "because there were more women than scholars in the Chapel." The Merton poet, when he welcomed the Queen, conveniently outraged either his conscience or his knowledge of the past when he penned among his sixteen verses the couplet:

> "Our pious founder, knew he this daye's state,
> Would quit his mansion to congratulate."

The courtiers though "neat and gay in their apparell" were yet "very nasty and beastly . . . rude, rough, whoremongers, vaine, empty, careless." At least they were a poor substitute for the Scholars of Merton, and the College was well rid of King, Queen, and Court in February.†

Such visits of honour were frequent while Clayton was Warden. The Prince of Orange was welcomed in December 1670. In January 1681 the King wrote choosing Merton, Corpus, and Christ Church, to house him, his Queen, his Court, and his Parliament. The scholars as usual departed, and King and Parliament duly arrived on March 14. On March 28, Charles dissolved

* *E.g.*, January 1666. Sir Alex. Frazer, M.D., had a daughter "born and baptized in Merton."

† *Cf.* Reg. and Wood, "Life," i. 396, *sqq.*, ii. 59, *sqq.*

Parliament—known hence as the Week-ed Parliament," and the next day the Queen and her retinue left the College.

> "We schollers were expelled awhile
> To let the senatours in,
> But they behaved themselves so ill
> That we returned agen,"

sang the poet of the period.* So the College could happily return to the use of its silver plate, which, in prospect of the visit, it had sagaciously locked up in the treasury, and dined off earthenware instead.

The list of royal receptions was closed by the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York, and the Princess Anne, on May 19, 1683.†

Effusive loyalty indeed took the place of learning. The proclamation of James II. in Oxford on February 11, 1685, was well received at Merton College.

"At Merton College was a bonfier, severall times supplied, made in the middle of the great quadrangle‡ between 6 and 7 at night. To which the Sub-Warden and fellowes with other Masters of the House, going solemnly from the common chamber to it and standing all round, they altogeather knelt downe on the ground, and every man having a glass of claret put into his hand, did upon word given, drink the health of King James II., and, after severall pauses, the health of Queen Maria Beatrix, princess of Orange, princesse of Denmarke, and all his majestie's loyall subjects, and to the pious memory of King Charles II. There were between that time and eleven at night two barrells of beere drunk out at the bonfier by the junior scholars and severall of the parish boys and neighbours and servants of the house. The gravest and greatest seniors of the House were mellow that night, as at other Colleges."§

Twenty four links blazed on the top of Merton

* Wood, "Life," ii. 513, *sqq.*, and Reg. *cf.* "The Guardian's Instruction" (1688) p. 75.

† *Ibid.* iii. 49.

‡ *I.e.*, the Fellows' Quadrangle, then devoid of grass.

§ Wood, "Life," iii. 129. This last sentence has been (for obvious reasons) erased, but is still legible.

tower on Coronation day, April 13, between nine and ten at night. July 1 saw more rejoicings, when the news of Monmouth's defeat reached Oxford. Merton and Christ Church lit bonfires, the former in Mob Quad. for fear of disturbing the old Warden's sleep. This can scarcely however have been untroubled. For the forty stout and valiant "pikemen and musketeers," formed from the ranks of the scholars of Merton, fired their guns over the blaze as every new health was drunk, and crowded 'twixt times round the barrel of beer allowed them. The Sub-Warden and Fellows came out and "drank healths with the undergraduates." * A Fellow and a Postmaster were seriously damaged by a coal jumping from the fire on to a paper of powder in the Fellow's hands. A week after, at midnight, the drum was heard beating in Merton Quadrangle, and the Merton warriors marched out to catch fugitives at Islip.† In view of such rejoicings it was found necessary in July 1691 to build a private brew-house at the College expense in the Grove, as so much beer was drunk, and the high malt tax on the public brewer sent his prices up.‡

It is significant that though the chief pursuit, it is said, at the time was horrid drinking in the new coffee-houses and in the men's own rooms, and though at an election of Fellows a good candidate could be put aside as being "too precise and religious and therefore not fit to make a societie man," § yet the Romish tendencies of the Court met with small approval at Merton. The birth of the Prince of Wales was passed over in Merton

* Wood, "Life," iii. 149. This last sentence also has been (for obvious reasons) erased, but is still legible.

† Wood, "Life," iii. 141, 149, 151.

‡ Reg. *cf.* Rogers, "Prices," v. 705.

§ Wood "Life," ii. 300, 429, iii. 424.

on June 10, 1688, in gloomy silence. No bells were rung nor bonfires lit (yet Merton was not averse to these employments), for "if he lives he is to be bred up a Papist." * It was left to Magdalen to win glory by open resistance. But Merton made no sign of loyalty when the Prince of Orange landed at Torbay on November 5. Only its plate was hastily hidden when news of this "tumultus" reached the College on the eleventh. Apart from this, the Revolution of 1688–9 affected the course of College history as little as the Trial of the seven Bishops. No finger was raised on James' behalf.

### Clayton and the College.

Archbishop Juxon had appointed Clayton Warden against his own better judgment. His successors, Sheldon and Sancroft, paid the penalty. Thick as the autumn leaves of Vallombrosa, letters of complaint from Fellows and Warden alike drove in clouds upon them. The ill-feeling was abiding: the grievances too petty for narration. One unhappy Fellow, William Cardonnel, was driven to suicide. The Warden's gardener demanded money of him one day, he being Bursar, and in a fit of anger, for the Warden was ever apt at fleecing the College, he bade "the Warden be hang'd! he should have no money." Instead of which he hanged himself in his room, as the Warden extorted an apology from him on his knees, and the matter preyed upon his mind. He was buried at eleven of night, October 23, 1681, "stark naked in the vestrie yard," where his grave was found during repairs in 1863.†

* Wood, "Life," iii. 268.

† *Cf.* Prideaux, Clar. Soc. Publ., 1875, 114–115. Wood, "Life," ii. 557.

Many evils, indeed, according to Anthony Wood, ensued "by having a married stranger thrust upon them." The Warden's lady was most extravagant. The old furniture in the Warden's house did not please her. The College must buy her new, including "a very larg looking-glass, for her to see her ugly face, and body to the middle." This cost £10. The House was too small. Hence the Warden quietly appropriated Fellows' rooms in the new quadrangle. The garden was poor. New and costly trees and roots were bought, of course at the College expense, and a lordly watch-tower summer-house, costing nearly £100, was built at its southern end where the path ran by to the Fellows' garden,

"wherein her ladyship and her gossips may take their pleasure, and any eves-dropper of the family may harken what any of the fellows should accidentally talk of."

And so on *ad infinitum*.* Making all allowance for the exaggeration caused by Anthony Wood's dislike, in itself a reasonable dislike, to women's interference in College or University concerns, yet it is evident that the College under Clayton was never a peaceful home of learning. And this is shown by the record in the Register which narrates the Warden's death on October 4, 1693. The customary scribe has inserted the usual pious lament:

"Nobisque tristissimum tam chari capitis desiderium reliquit;

another hand inserts pathetically the following:

"Nobis quidem ille, nos non illi: reliquit enim Collegio cui tamdiu praefuit, et a quo tam multa accepit, sum. tot. $oo_{li}$ $oo^{s}$ $oo^{d}$."

* Wood, "Life," i. 394–398,

### Anthony Wood.

Two years later died on November 28, and was buried in Merton Ante-chapel, the Warden's hostile critic, Anthony Wood. He had been Postmaster at Merton from October 18, 1647, and lived in the attic on top of the stair-case next the entrance-gate in the front quadrangle. Thence, as Bible-Clerk, in April 1650 he moved to the "clerks' chamber," *i.e.*, the ground-floor room in Mob Quad., the door of which is opposite the entrance to the Outer Sacristy. Though never Fellow, he continued to live and battel in College till 1673, when he quarrelled with the Common Room and went to live in his father's house, the old "Postmasters' Hall," opposite the College. Here he fared much worse, and was not wanted. In 1666 and 1679 he was busy among the Merton archives, and a box full of "disjecta membra" of results is now preserved in the Treasury. But he seems never to have written the history of his own College, though proposing to himself so to do. He quarrelled fiercely with the Warden on his own account in 1677 and 1679, Clayton calling him "a disturber of the peace" of the College, and denouncing him as a Papist during the scare of the Popish Plot. He retaliated in his diary, which has survived and surpasses Clayton's attacks. Never anything but a fierce hater, with very little sense of humour, and a great capacity for making himself and all around him both disagreeable and miserable, he has dealt freely in judgments not one of which can be accepted without corroboration. In the accumulation of facts of the past and record of events of his present, he stands out unrivalled as Oxford's greatest antiquarian and diarist. Neither

would his fame have suffered had he, with readier generosity, acknowledged more freely the help which he received in his researches from both earlier archæologists and his own contemporaries, such as Brian Twyne and John Aubrey. But such debts he left to posterity to discover.

### Lydall and Martin.

There follows an age of petty bickering in the history of Merton College. The rumours and excitement of war had died away, and neither religion nor learning was pursued with very great enthusiasm.

> "Non tuba directi, non aeris cornua flexi,
> Non galeae, non ensis erant: sine militis usu
> Mollia securae peragebant otia gentes."

But it was no golden age which pressed hard after that of bronze just past, but one of a little sober and polished learning, and a great deal of quiet indolence. Once Merton College comes yet again to the fore, and for the fourth time in championship of a cause most unpopular with the great majority in the University. And, as always, the Mertonians front unpopularity bravely and yield not one inch of ground. Then, as the excitement dies away and the Hanoverian cause finally triumphs, a calm grey peace settles down over the College. Few prominent events strike out from the gloom to catch the attention of the annalist, who can but hasten on till he finds himself in the midst of the revival of learning and study and the fierce stress of competition, whether of individuals in examinations, or of Colleges in reputation, which marks the nineteenth century's closing days.

The two Wardens who followed Clayton, Richard

Lydall (1693–1704) and Edmund Martin (1704–1709), both were doctors of medicine, both had disagreeable remarks made about their election, both are distinguished in no other way. Lydall was an old man with a wife and seven or eight children. Consequently, Anthony Wood's last years are largely spent in railing at him as

"a pack-horse in the practical and old Galenical way of physick; knows nothing else; buyes no bookes nor understands what learning is in the world."

He altered some windows in the Warden's house:

"The majestick light of the roome was lost. Had he been a single man, and not had a nice wife with six or seven daughters, this would not have been done."

He "set up a coach:"

"Yet had he been a single man he would have kept none." *

The Fellows quarrelled over his election, and Archbishop Tillotson had to quiet the malcontents. A flying visit from King William to Oxford in November 1695; the first appointment at Dr. John Bateman's instance of a mathematical lecturer at Merton in August 1698; and a proposal to sell some of the Grove to Corpus in June 1701, which was most decisively vetoed by Archbishop Tenison:

"nullam portiunculam Collegii situs vel debere alienare vel posse";

these events carried the College to 1704. It was then thought that Bateman, who had been Fellow since 1663, and was a most eminent physician, would be chosen Warden in Lydall's room. Instead of him however, Archbishop Tenison named Edmund Martin,

* Wood, "Life," iii. 436.

"Who by a lazy epicurean life and an utter neglect of all discipline has very much prejudiced that noble and ancient seminary,"*

says Wood's successor in the gentle art of malevolence.

"Homo enim erat vinolentus et indoctus: no better a Governour than scholar."†

Passions were running high. The College and its Wardens were Whig: the critic a high Tory. That Merton was in no desperate state is shown in that the great election of eight Fellows on November 28, 1705, was popularly known as the "Golden Election," so searching was the examination, so able were the elected. Debt and falling rents however prevented their actual admission till May 21, 1708.‡

### John Holland.

A break in the long list of medical Wardens comes with the Archbishop's choice of John Holland, S.T.P., as Warden on Martin's death in 1709, in preference to the man obviously intended by the fellows for election, Charles King, M.D. The choice was, however, a good one, and moreover not unpopular, as was seen when Holland entered the College in such state as recalled Savile's admission. That he was called "Dull John" by the unsparing Tory critic § was merely a sign of his political opinions. It is during his 25 years of office that Merton became famous as a Whig centre in the University, and its sons suffered no small persecution on that account. Again Lincoln men were joined with Merton in withstanding the popular creed, and when on

* Hearne, O.H.S., ii. 230.
† Hearne, O.H.S., vii. 215–219.
‡ Reg. and Hearne, O.H.S., ii. 115.
§ Hearne, O.H.S., vii. 227.

January 5, 1712, the news came of the Duke of Marlborough's dismissal, the chief of the many

"violent Whiggs who wept and lamented the Downfall of their Great Duke, who was their Idol" *

were the Warden of Merton, John Potter, Regius Professor of Divinity and Fellow of Lincoln, and the Warden of Wadham.

### Merton Whigs and Oxford Tories.

During the first half of the eighteenth century Oxford was violently Jacobite. The few men bold enough to profess Whig tendencies were hunted down and persecuted by University official and Undergraduate alike; the few Colleges, such as Merton, Exeter, Christ Church, Wadham,† which were reputed "Whig," were suspected and slandered, and their members ostracised from general society. If the shouting of "Redeat" in Oxford could have brought the Stuarts home, Hanover would not for long have lacked its prince's presence.

When the fervour and excitement was at its height, when King George was but newly seated on the throne, and the Jacobites were active in Scotland, it needed not only courage but also prudence on the part of the few loyal Whigs of Oxford if disturbances were to be avoided. Now prudence is apt to take to flight when undergraduates and junior fellows once get the chance of advertising their own strong convictions in presence of a general hostility, above all when the University authorities are thought by such a minority not only to look askance upon its own creed, but themselves to be disloyal to the Crown. The chance of combining open defiance to all popular and University authority with

* Hearne, O.H.S. xiii. 289. † Charles Wesley's list in 1734.

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martyrdom and stubborn loyalty is really not to be resisted.

Thus the "Constitution Club"* thrived on hostility, and collected the scattered adherents of the cause from all Colleges. Yearly it celebrated the King's birthday with great enthusiasm and no little noise by a dinner at the King's Head Tavern in High Street. At the end of May, evenings may well be warm and a jovial atmosphere oppressive. Hence windows are opened. The Jacobite crowd collects underneath and listens. And the authorities not unnaturally look upon the Club as responsible for the riot.

So it chanced in 1715, when the Club, driven from their tavern by mob violence on May 28, repeated their dinner at Oriel next night at 6. The Jacobite mob gathered with great zest, till a shot fired from Oriel wounded a B.N.C. zealot among them. Whereupon with some precipitance the crowd dispersed, and spent the rest of that happy evening pulling down conventicles.

Next year the Club gathered again. Its steward now was Richard Meadowcourt, a very Junior Fellow of Merton. For he had been elected in March, and it was now but May 29. To assist in drinking the King's health the Club entertained that night some officers of the army. Despite the crowd outside the window shouting with the full strength of their lungs "Down with the Roundheads" the merriment inside waxed fast and furious till with the hour of eleven there entered upon the scene the Proctor. Nothing abashed, the Merton Fellow rose from his chair at the head of the

* For all that follows, *cf.* "Terrae Filius," ed. 1726, pp. 81–86, 115–131; and Wordsworth's "Univ. Life in the xviii. century," 42–51.

table. "The Club was gathered to drink King George's health. They would be much obliged to their unexpected guest if he would be pleased to drink the toast with them." The officers gaily applauded. The proctor tremblingly complied.

Next day was seen in due course the reverse of the picture. Not only was Meadowcourt fined 40*s.* (which would then have paid his battels for a year), but his name with that of a fellow Whig reveller—one Carty of University—was entered in the Black Book, and for two years he was kept back from taking his Master's degree by Proctorial Authority. Undeterred by which dire event, the Constitution Club celebrated the day of the King's accession in 1717 with a bonfire and illuminations.

The importance of the whole matter was grossly magnified at the time, and Meadowcourt's punishment probably richly deserved. There is, however, no doubt that though the connection of Merton College with the riot is more or less a chance one, yet Merton College was known as a Whig College, and its members for that reason were nicknamed "Lollards." And if the rival convivial Tory club, the "High Borlace," rejected "Mr. Moseley of Merton" when standing for election in 1734, it can only have been caused by their fear of contamination by the accursed thing, lest the atmosphere of Merton should cling round even its Tory representative. Neither was Meadowcourt a man of peace. In 1719 he denounced to the Vice-chancellor the unfortunate Professor of Poetry, Thomas Warton, for a sermon as tending "to asperse and blacken the administration of King George." When the Vice-chancellor took no notice whatever, he denounced him

as well as the preacher to one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State, and a peremptory order came down from London that the Vice-chancellor should investigate the affair. But by this time the Professor with great prudence had managed to lose the notes of his sermon and nothing could be done. So that at the end of the year the Vice-chancellor with great joy

"in a publick speech triumphed over the government and insulted Mr. Meadowcourt, calling him 'Delator turbulentus,' who 'ad extraneos judices provocavit, spreta mea authoritate, spreto juramento suo."

It was all amusing enough, this Whig and Tory quarrel in the University, and all very futile. Still the Tory fervour burned brightly in 1754, and mattered not one whit.* In the eighteenth century it was not true that "what Oxford thinks to-day, England will think to-morrow." The enthusiasm died out, and the cloud of dulness settled down over the annals of Merton. Neither had the College the least part or interest in the Methodist movement, separating herein from Lincoln College, a movement which the Oxford authorities treated as foolishly as the Cambridge did wisely. Only internal matters fill its annals for the rest of the century.

### Disputes and Visitations.

The most fruitful source of disturbance of College harmony at this time were the old questions of the number of Fellows to be maintained, and of the precise value of a benefice which should disqualify for the retention of a fellowship. Appeals to the Visitor were hence of frequent occurrence. On March 1, 1711,

* *Cf.* Lecky, "History Eng.," ii. 68; Meadowcourt became Principal of the Postmasters in 1731.

Archbishop Tenison raised the value of the "uberius beneficium" from £8, where Laud had fixed it, to £50, but commanded the new limit should be straitly observed. This was regarded as a victory of the junior over the senior Fellows.* Five years later, Archbishop Wake, on appeal, issued an injunction that the number of Fellows should be kept up to 24.† In Robert Wyntle's Wardenship (1734–1750), new appeals to Archbishop Potter, in June 1737, were the final outcome of that strife between Warden and Fellows which the most trivial questions were ever kindling. Hence the Archbishop sent five commissioners, who conducted a long and searching inquiry into all causes of complaint, holding their court at Merton at frequent intervals from September 27, 1737, to May 18, 1738. On July 8 his injunctions were issued, being mainly a reinforcement of Laud's rules of discipline of life and study, and regulating the power of the Warden at College meetings, and the incidence of expense. His general exhortation however, to forget and forgive, to observe civility, courtesy, and good fellowship, bore small fruit. Throughout 1738 more complaints poured in, "The Warden whom scarce anything less than absolute power will satisfy," as the Fellows described him, being as eager in his denunciations as the Fellows themselves. At last the wearied Archbishop washed his hands of the whole concern. "If any Fellow appealed to him on any matter save of the gravest import, he should be accounted an enemy to the peace of the Society. As for the Warden, instead of making unintelligible complaints, he had far better live peaceably and attend to his

* *Cf.* Hearne, O.H.S., xiii. 121–3.

† Reg. and Cal. Rec. 110.

duties." So matters quieted down, the only result being that the Archbishop's right of Visitation, questioned during the controversy, was effectually confirmed by the Court of King's Bench, Westminster. Since 1738 no Archbishop of Canterbury has had to visit the College to restore peace or settle an angry war.

### Merton Garden.

While thus the Fellows were employing their time in quarrelling, or making large purchases of South Sea Stock (as in 1720 and 1729), the younger part of the community could scarce be expected to think of nothing but study. If we may trust contemporary witnesses, the Undergraduate abandoned himself to the delights of flirtation, and an inrushing tide of ladies drove studies in Oxford to the winds and morals after them. And the chief pleasure resort in the whole University was the Merton College Garden, then open, it seems, day and night to the public. The Undergraduate gave lavish entertainments:

> "In warmer times he urged his generous love,
> Nor wished in vain her gentle heart to move;
> Her hungry sire at College entertained,
> With wine and pigeons his consent he gained."

Then an adjournment was made to the garden. Two poems of the years 1717, 1718, describe the scenes from amusingly opposite points of view. The one poet is a high Tory and enthusiastic Jacobite, who can see in the ladies thronging Merton Gardens but "charming nymphs, who grace th' Oxonian plains."

> "Of Ida's hill no more let Poets sing
> And from the skies contending Beauties bring;
> In Merton Groves a nobler strife is seen.
> A claim more doubtful and a brighter scene."

As each nymph passes, more beautiful than the last, his song soars on high in rapt ecstasy:

> "Who has not heard of the Idalian Grove,
> Fit scene of beauty, blissful scene of Love?
> Alcinous' Gardens? Or Armida's Bowers?
> (Immortal landskips, ever blooming Flow'rs.)
> * * * * *
> "O Merton! Could I sing in equal lays,
> Not these alone should boast eternal praise;
> Thy soft recesses, and thy cool retreats,
> Of Albion's brighter Nymphs the blissful seats,
> Like them, for ever green, for ever young,
> Shou'd bloom for ever in Poetick song."

Cruel indeed to such empty-headed gallantry, the Whig poet, a very sober Puritan of Puritans, answers at first in surly prose:

> "I am not the only one that has taken notice of the almost universal corruption of our youth, which is to be imputed to nothing so much as to that multitude of Female Residentiaries who have of late infested our learned retirements and drawn off Numbers of unwary young persons from their studies."

What results but "the greater mischief of mistresses and imprudent marriages"? These "Oxford Beauties" "are not always to be Phyllised up in fulsom Panegyrick."

Then the Puritan Pegasus also soars with leaden hoof:

> "In vain his Tutor with a watchful care
> Rebukes his folly, warns him to beware,
> Aspire beyond the common Merton crowd,
> The vain, the lewd, the impudent and proud,
> Beauty in Oxford is a thing so scarce
> That all thy Panegyrick turns to farce."

In actual fact Belinda, Chloe, and all the rest, made of Merton Gardens a public scandal. In these years the garden had, for this reason, to be locked on Sunday

nights, and on April 23, 1720, the College closed it finally to the public—and not too soon. Thus the "College-Smart" and his female acquaintances had to betake themselves instead to the "fair" in Magdalen College Walk. The riddance was to the permanent benefit of Merton College.*

### Life and Studies.

Richard Steele was Postmaster at Merton 1691–94. He left Oxford without taking a degree, but "with the love of the whole Society," and on August 1, 1712, presented his old College with a copy of the "Tatler," in three volumes (published 1710–11), now in the College Library. In the next year he wrote in the 34th number of the "Englishman":

"Some business lately called me to Oxford. . . . The sight of that College I am more particularly obliged to filled my heart with unspeakable joy."†

But neither Steele nor his friend Addison, then Demy of Magdalen, had reason to speak very highly of the love of learning in the University. Others, doubtless, besides Steele, while at Merton, spent their time in writing comedies (the then equivalent for the erotic sonnet)—and burned them afterwards. Gibbon's witness is well known. Chesterfield in 1749 wrote to a friend about Dublin University:

"Our two Universities at least will do it no hurt unless by their examples, for I cannot believe that their present reputations will invite people in Ireland to send their sons there. The one (Cambridge) is sunk into the lowest obscurity, and the existence of Oxford would

* The Poems are, "Merton Walks, or The Oxford Beauties." 2nd ed. Oxford, 1717, 6*d.*; and "Strephon's Revenge, A Satire." 2nd ed. London, 1718. With preface.

† Aitken's "Steele," i. 37.

not be known if it were not for the treasonable spirit publicly avowed and often exerted there."*

It cannot be said that Merton College under the last three Wardens of the century, John Robinson (1750–59), Henry Barton (1759–90), and Scrope Berdmore (1790–December 1809) (the last of the long list of Merton Vice-Chancellors) displayed any great intellectual vigour in measure above its general standard in the University. The Merton Variation-exercises for the first time were scantily and hastily performed, and often neglected altogether in the eighteenth century. Whether youths should learn the Art of Poetry, whether actors should be allowed in a well-regulated State, whether it were foolish to seek to know the future—such questions were hardly very stimulating or suggestive. Aristotle, after 1720, drops completely out of sight. The Divinity Lecture, however, (instituted in 1672 by the benefaction of Griffin Higgs, Fellow in 1611,†) the Knightley Catechetical Lecture,‡ and those in Latin, Greek, and Mathematics, were regularly delivered, neither did Merton fail to produce polished scholars and gentlemanly, if cold, theologians. Its most painstaking antiquarian, Samuel Kilner, whose researches were as voluminous as they lack all arrangement and proportion, was Postmaster 1750 and Fellow 1753–1815, and he followed in the footsteps of another Merton historian, Francis Astry, Fellow in 1700.

Eminent Mertonians of the eighteenth century§ were

* Lecky, iii. 19.

† Reg. and Arch. ii. 2, 292.

‡ Founded by Savile 1589; refounded by Knightley in 1635, and his bequest re-devoted to this object in 1691. *Cf.* Arch. ii. 2, 283–6. MS. Ballard, 46, and Reg.

§ In this and the following paragraph [f] signifies Fellow, [p] Postmaster, [c] Commoner, [e] Exhibitioner.

the Hon. Thos. Burnet, [c]1705, aged 12* (Justice of Common Pleas 1741–53); Sir Giles Rooke, [f]1765–85, (Judge of Common Pleas 1793–1808); Thomas Tyrwhitt, [f]1755 (Under-Secretary for War 1756, Clerk of House of Commons 1762–68, annotator of Chaucer and Shakespeare); John Graves Simcoe, [c]1769 (first Governor, "Founder and Organiser" of Upper Canada: thus the first of the three Merton Governors of that country); Sir Christopher Puller, [f]1798 (Chief Justice of Bengal 1823–24).

To the Episcopal Bench Merton sent John Gilbert, [f]1716 (Llandaff 1740, Salisbury 1748, York 1757–61); Shute Barrington, [f]1755 (Llandaff 1769, Salisbury 1782, Durham 1791–1826); John Hume, [p]1721 (Bristol 1758, Oxford 1758, Salisbury 1766–82); James Cornwallis, [f]1763 (Lichfield 1781). Raphoe in Ireland claimed two Mertonian prelates—viz., in 1701 Robert Huntingdon ([f]1658, Provost of Trinity College Dublin 1683, an able orientalist, and donor of many Arabic MSS. to Merton Library); and in 1753 Robert Downes ([c]1721). Hon. William Herbert, [f]1799, became Dean of Manchester 1840–47, and William Stanley Goddard, [c]1776, Head Master of Winchester 1793–1810.

But the list of services rendered Church, State, and University by Mertonians in the eighteenth century does not bear comparison with those of centuries which preceded it, or of that which has followed. And the one piece of evidence which has come down to us from that time perhaps gives a valid reason. In 1763 James Harris, first Earl of Malmesbury, matriculated at Merton from Winchester. In later years he noted down his reminiscences of his Oxford life:

* For "twelve" as age of matriculation *cf.* "The Guardian's Instruction" (1688) p. 58.

"The two years of my life I look back to as most unprofitably spent were those I passed at Merton. The discipline of the University happened also at this particular moment to be so lax that a Gentleman-Commoner was under no restraint and never called upon to attend either lectures or chapel or hall. My Tutor, an excellent and worthy man, according to the practice of all Tutors at that moment, gave himself no concern about his pupils. I never saw him but during a fortnight when I took into my head to be taught trigonometry.

"The set of men with whom I lived were very pleasant but very idle fellows. Our Life was an imitation of high life in London. Luckily drinking was not the fashion; but what we did drink was claret, and we had our regular round of evening card parties to the great derangement of our finances. It has often been a matter of surprise to me that so many of us made our way so well in the world and so creditably." *

Peacefully and without incident the College entered upon the nineteenth century.

### Early Years of the Century.

The French wars kindled the patriotic ardour of the College. It spared not to make large money contributions to the Government, the Army, British prisoners in France, the widows and orphans of the British killed at Salamanca and Waterloo, and the volunteers. Nor were such gifts confined to England. French refugees, the Russians who suffered during Napoleon's invasion, the Germans harried by the war—all were objects of Merton bounty. The volunteers were especially popular. Not only did the corps in 1798 enrol many Mertonians, but large sums of money were voted it by the College in 1798, 1803, and 1808.

Such generosity, combined with the high price of provisions, caused the College finances continual embarrassment till the war ended. This was not lightened

* O.H.S. xxii. p. 157.

by the expenditure of very large sums upon the Warden's House when Peter Vaughan succeeded Berdmore in January 1810. The numbers in the College diminished. In 1806 both the Commoners' and the Fellows' table in Hall were very scantily attended. Thus in 1831 there were but ten or fifteen Commoners in the College, and ten years later not more than twenty-six Undergraduates in all.* The number of Fellows, however, dropped below twenty only in the years 1846 and 1864–67, otherwise maintaining that number, or over, through the century up to the year 1885. A large vase of Siberian jasper, now in the Warden's house, recalls the visit to the College, in June 1814, of the Russian Emperor Alexander, and his suite, who, at the request of the Prince Regent, were entertained and lodged in Merton. A conspicuously ugly and unnecessary inscription recording the fact was put up in Hall under the founder's picture. Happily it is now removed. The vase arrived in 1822. Peter Vaughan died in July 1826, and was succeeded as Warden by Robert Bullock Marsham, who held that office no less than fifty-four years.

The great upheaval of the Tractarian movement seems not very greatly to have influenced Merton, although two of its most distinguished adherents were Fellows of the College. Henry Edward Manning of Balliol was elected Fellow of Merton on April 27, 1832, (resigning his fellowship, however, on the score of a "uberius beneficium" next year); and James Robert Hope [-Scott] of Christ Church in April 1833, who gave the proceeds of five years of his fellowship towards re-roofing the chapel. William Adams was Postmaster

* Arch. ii. 2, 57, and O.H.S. xxii. 347.

1832, Fellow and Tutor 1837–1848. And perhaps the most famous Oxford tutor of the century, William Sewell, had been Postmaster of Merton from 1822–27 before his election as Fellow of Exeter. Though a High Churchman, he was no devoted adherent of Pusey and Newman.

"Sidney Smith said of Sewell, 'Thou art Suillius'—*i.e.*, a little pig; because he would not, as the saying is, 'go the whole hog.'" *

And this seems to have been the prevailing temper of Mertonians in the religious controversy.

### Reform and Commissions.

"The studies of the University were first raised from their abject state by a statute passed in 1800."† This date marks the beginning of the present widely extended examination system at Oxford. But examinations must needs form a small, perhaps a sorry, part of any great system of learning and education. That which the University had begun must be amplified and continued in the Colleges.

It was in Merton College that sixty years ago ideas of the reform of College teaching and discipline, and changes in the appropriation of fellowships, took a very visible shape, and that this was so was due chiefly to the energy of J. R. Hope. Of the need of reform of the kind, if the College should continue as in the farther past to do good service, he had a very strong conviction, and he brought it home to other men. A threatened interference from outside in the shape of the Earl of Radnor's proposal to appoint a Universities' Commission perhaps helped his work in the senior

* Henry Robinson's "Recollections of S. Alban Hall." O.H.S. xxii. 351–2.

† Commissioners of 1850.

Common Room of Merton College. For he began his work at home.

In March 1837 the College appointed a Committee of the Warden and four Fellows, one of whom was Hope, to collect from a study of the College archives the

"regulations at present obligatory upon the Warden and Fellows, and to make such observations upon them as they may think fit."

In April of the next year Hope presented a preliminary draft report of his own devising for publication among the Fellows. Finally, on April 5, 1839, the Committee as a whole made its report to the College. It is most characteristic of the temper of these our early Merton reformers that they neither shrank from, nor scorned, the appeal to antiquity. Rather, they made it the very basis of all their deliberations and proposals. Their first inquiry was into the motives of the founder and the original purposes of benefactions. They did not conceive of the College and its revenues as a bare tablet on which to impress the sign-tokens of their own originality and super-eminent wisdom. While full of the zeal for useful reform, they could still reverence historical continuity, nor did they propose to break with light ridicule the chain of so many generations that links Merton College to the past.

They reported simply that the College was founded mainly for poor students to study theology, though a few, for the good of the Church, might study civil and canon law. The College determined as simply that in future all Fellows save five should observe their founder's intention, and the five might study any branch of jurisprudence. It was easier to command than to enforce. In November 1846 Berdmore Compton re-opened the question. It was found that the reforms of 1839 had

not remedied the great deficiency in the number of clerical Fellows in the College, and new orders were issued that all fellowships in future, save six, should be clerical, or awarded to those intending to take holy orders. Of the six, five should profess law, and one might study medicine. But J. R. Hope vacated his fellowship by marriage in 1847; the tide turned, and ever since has been running strongly the other way. The appeal to antiquity, which as it stirred Oriel in questions of religion swayed Merton in questions of the reform of study, is discredited. The narrowness of the aims proposed by Hope is indeed obvious, and it was but natural that on May 17, 1853, the College revolted. Henceforth but a bare majority should study theology. There should be five tutors to teach divinity, philosophy, scholarship, history (ancient and modern), and mathematics. And the proposal to maintain University Professors at the expense of College fellowships (finally established as a general University system by the Commission of 1877) was viewed favourably at Merton as far back as 1853. After long correspondence the principle of these 1853 resolutions was accepted by Archbishop Sumner on November 13, 1854, and an elaborate code was then framed, which enlarged the range of study to include "all branches of useful learning."

Reform indeed there was to be. The Royal Commission of inquiry, already, in August 1850, instituted, was followed in 1854 by the Oxford University Reform Act. Soon after, executive Parliamentary Commissioners were appointed, and in all the negotiations which followed Merton College met these more than half way. Its draft statutes of 1853 were practically incorporated into the new Ordinances received on February 25, 1857, from

the Commissioners, who indeed expressed their thanks to the College for setting this example of eager good will. Once again, as in Walter de Merton's day, Oxford University was setting forth on new paths, and Merton College was the pioneer.

More changes followed. In November 1871 the College accepted the Prime Minister's proposal of a new Commission of inquiry into questions of finance. Finally the latest Parliamentary Commission of 1877–1882 abrogated the work of its predecessor, and published on June 16, 1881, the code of statutes under which Merton College is now governed.

Of Walter de Merton's statutes nothing now remains. In vain protests were made against their complete repeal. Yet surely the past had merited greater consideration even from Parliamentary iconoclasts! The almost entire absence of Fellows studying theology or canon law "for the good of the Church," the abolition of marriage restrictions, the nature of the seven years' "ordinary fellowship" (whose possessor is bound by no compulsion to render any service of any kind whatever to his College, save draw money from it)—these and other features of the new system might seem strange to Walter de Merton, could he to-day revisit his College, and come to shipwreck upon his hopes and intentions, could he frame these anew. But what speculations could be more idle to-day? Has not wisdom been accumulating during six centuries? To appeal to the past, is not this counted to-day the merest fabled folly? At least in the loyalty to their College of her sons the nineteenth may challenge the thirteenth century, the latest vie with the earliest years of the life of the House of Scholars of Merton.

### Later Events.

For the rest, the nineteenth century, as it passes, bears away with it the recollection of many events, while others may live in record. A slight cause of dissension with the Bishop of Oxford, originating in 1847 with regard to the use of the College Chapel as a parish church, ended finally, after long and often fruitless negotiations, only on September 30, 1891, when the parish was amalgamated with that of S. Peter's-in-the-East. Thus Merton College Chapel was finally relieved of parochial functions. Far more important was the union of S. Alban Hall with Merton College. This question was broached in March 1855, revived in 1861–2 without success, but finally answered by the statute passed for the union of the two on May 3, 1882. The subway connecting the Hall with the front quadrangle of Merton College, made in 1883, connected both together visibly, and S. Alban Hall is for the future a quadrangle of Merton College.* Before this was effected, the modern growth in the numbers of Undergraduates had caused in 1860–1 various proposals to be made of a most alarming character. They issued, however, eventually in nothing worse (and it was possible for worse to have happened) than the erection of the new buildings. These were formally opened on June 15, 1864, when a great commemoration of the Merton sexcentenary was celebrated with magnificence in Hall, the College entertaining 140 guests.

### Nineteenth Century Records.

Neither has this century fallen short of any of its predecessors in seeing Merton send forth her scholars to

* *Cf.* Plate V., showing its most picturesque interior.

places of high honour and responsibility. The roll is not a short one. George Hamilton Seymour (ᵖ1814, ᶠ1821) enjoyed a most distinguished career in the diplomatic service for long years. He was Ambassador at St. Petersburg from 1851 till the outbreak of the Crimean War, and at Vienna 1855–58; also Privy Councillor 1854.

James Stuart Wortley (ᶠ1826–46) was Privy Councillor in 1846, Recorder of the City of London 1850, and Solicitor-General 1856–57.

Stanley Hardinge Giffard, Earl of Halsbury, thrice Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain, and High Steward, matriculated at Merton in 1842; and Lord Randolph Churchill in October 1867. Among other notable names are those of James Bruce, Earl of Elgin, ᶠ1835 (Governor-General of Canada 1847–55, Plenipotentiary to China 1857, Postmaster-General 1859, Viceroy of India 1862–1863); Edmund Walter Head ᶠ1830–39, and tutor (Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick 1847–54, Governor-General of Canada 1854–61); Charles A. Roe, ᵖ1860 (Judge of the Chief Court of the Punjab); John Stratford Dugdale, Jackson Scholar 1853 (Q.C., Recorder of Birmingham 1877, Chancellor of Diocese of Worcester 1886).

To episcopal duties have gone Edward Denison, ᶠ1826–37 (Salisbury 1837–54); Walter Kerr Hamilton, ᶠ1832–42 (Salisbury 1854–69); John Fielder Mackarness, ᵖ1840–44 (Oxford 1870–88); George Mackarness, ᵖ1841–45 (Argyll and the Isles 1874–83); Edmund Knox, ᶠ1868–84 (Coventry 1894), and Mandell Creighton, ᵖ1862, ᶠ1866, tutor 1866–75

[*Note.*—In this and the five following pages ᶠ means Fellow, ᵖ Postmaster, ᵉ Exhibitioner, ᶜ Commoner.]

(Peterborough 1891–96, London 1896). In 1425–26 a Mertonian was Lord High Chancellor and Bishop of London*: 1898 sees the old achievement won once more. Edward Meyrick Goulburn, f1841, was Dean of Norwich 1866–89.

### John Coleridge Patteson.

In June 1852 John Coleridge Patteson of Balliol was elected Fellow of Merton. During his all too brief time of life at Merton he not only worked actively for University reform, but shared heartily in all the interests, cricketing as well as literary, of the College.

"I find" (he wrote in June 1852) "I am getting to know the Undergraduates here, which is what I wanted to do. It is my only chance of being of any use."

He left Merton finally in the summer of 1853 to devote himself to his missionary enterprise. Bishop of Melanesia in 1861, he still continued Fellow of Merton till his death at the hands of the natives ten years later. His monument by Woolner is in the North Transept of the College Chapel. Besides Patteson, two Colonial Bishops have come from Merton: Edmund Hobhouse, f1841–58, librarian and notable contributor to the College history (Nelson, New Zealand, 1858–65), William Moore Richardson, p1864–69 (Zanzibar 1895).

### University Distinctions.

Since Gilbert Trowe, p1702, f1708, became Professor of Botany in 1724, not a few Mertonians have been appointed to University Chairs. Such are T. Hardcastle, f1775 (Anglo-Saxon 1800–3); E. Nares, f1788

* John Kemp. *Cf.* page 63.

(Modern History [Regius] 1813–41); J. R. T. Eaton, f1847–65, and W. Wallace, f1867–97 (Moral Philosophy 1874–78 and 1882–97); W. Esson, f1860–97 (Geometry [Savilian] 1897); John Rhŷs, f1869–72 (Celtic 1877); T. H. Wyndham, f1867–76 (Aldrichian Demonstrator in Chemistry, 1873. George Aldrich himself was Commoner at Merton in 1739); Sir William Markby, p1846–50 (Reader in Indian Law 1878); S. R. Gardiner, f1893 (first Ford's Lecturer in English History 1896). The Professors of Comparative Anatomy (viz., George Rolleston, 1860–81; H. N. Moseley, 1881–91; E. Ray Lankester, 1881-98), and of English Language and Literature (viz., A. S. Napier, 1885), are Fellows of Merton in virtue of their professorships.

To govern other Colleges Merton has contributed: Thomas Fowler, p1850–54 (President of Corpus 1881); Edward Caird, f1864–67 (Master of Balliol 1893); John Rhŷs, p1858, f1869–72 (Principal of Jesus 1895); R. J. Wilson, p1858, f1867–88 (Warden of Keble 1888–97).

Forty-five Mertonians have been elected to fellowships during the century. Twenty-four of these have been elected at other Colleges—viz., at

University: J. Charnock, c1813.

Exeter: W. Sewell, p1822; J. F. Mackarness, p1840; H. W. Moore, p1860.

Oriel: Hartley Coleridge, p1815.

Queen's: T. F. Dallin, p1858.

Lincoln: T. Fowler, p1850; F. St. J. Thackeray, p1852.

All Souls: H. S. Milman, p1840; F. A. Goulburn, c1841; F. Compton, p1842; W. Markby, p1846 (and at Balliol); J. R. Maguire, p1874; A. Grant, p1884.

Magdalen: J. Y. Sargent, [p]1847 (and at Hertford); E. Chapman, [c]1860; H. M. Vernon, [p]1888.

Brasenose: W. H. Lucas, [p]1840.

Corpus: W. Chadwick, [p]1865; W. W. Fisher, [p]1868.

Christ Church: H. A. Colefax, [p]1885; Viscount St. Cyres, [e]1888.

St. John's: R. Copleston, [p]1864.

Worcester: R. W. Bush, [p]1838.

Twenty Postmasters and one Commoner have been elected Fellows of Merton. The latter was G. Rooke, [c]1814. The former are:

G. D. Grimes, 1800, 1806; T. Davies, 1802, 1806; F. Dyson, 1802, 1807; J. Lightfoot, 1803, 1807; E. J. Townsend, 1806, 1811; H. F. Whish, 1806, 1812;* J. C. Compton, 1810, 1814; G. Hammond, 1813, 1818; G. H. Seymour, 1814, 1821 (*cf. supra*); G. Ricketts, 1820, 1826; E. E. Villiers, 1824, 1831; W. Adams, 1833, 1837 (*cf. supra*); Berdmore Compton, 1838, 1841; H. R. Farrer, 1839, 1843; B. D. Compton, 1843, 1847; W. C. Stapylton, 1843, 1847; S. Edwardes, 1844, 1850; G. N. Freeling, 1848, 1852 (for forty years also Chaplain); Mandell Creighton, 1862, 1866 (*cf. supra*); and F. C. Crump, 1892, 1896.

The dates are those of election as Postmaster and as Fellow respectively.

University Scholarships have been gained by the following while in residence at Merton:

Craven: [p]F. W. Fowle, 1811; [p]D. W. Bernard, 1853; [f]R. C. L. Dear, 1868; [f]W. Wallace, 1869; [f]C. J. Cruttwell, 1871; [f]G. R. Scott, 1875; [f]Walter Scott, 1880.

* Gave a silver-branched candlestick to the Common Room on the fiftieth anniversary of his election, 1862; died in Coll., aged 80, in 1867.

Ireland: [p]John Young Sargent, 1851.

Hertford: [p]John Young Sargent, 1848.

Derby: [f]W. Scott, 1880; [f]F. H. B. Dale, 1895.

Boden Sanskrit: [p]C. G. Sperling, 1858; [p]C. A. Roe, 1863.

Mathematical (Senior): [f]A. W. Reinold, 1869; [f]T. Bowman, 1878.

*Ibid.* (Junior): [p]J. L. Capper, 1844; [p]S. M. Moens, 1854; [p]W. Chadwick, 1867; [p]L. W. Jones, 1877.

*Ibid.* (Exhibition): [p]A. E. Thomas, 1888.

Kennicott Hebrew: [f]C. T. Cruttwell, 1872.

Burdett-Coutts: [c]C. S. Taylor, 1871; [p]E. Cleminshaw, 1873.

Eldon Law: [f]W. Ashburner, 1889.

Radcliffe Travelling: [p]H. M. Vernon, 1897.

The following while at Merton College were awarded University Prizes:

Chancellor's (Latin Verse): [p]Peter Vaughan (afterwards Warden), 1788; [p]A. J. Wallace, 1849.

*Ibid.* (Latin Essay): [f]W. Scott, 1880.

*Ibid.* (English Essay): [p]J. Bartham, 1794; [p]C. P. Burney, 1809; [f]C. S. Currer, 1851; [f]G. C. Brodrick, 1855.

Newdigate: [p]H. B. Garrod, 1869; [c]J. Brooks, 1877.

Denyer: [f]J. R. King, 1863.

Arnold: [f]B. W. Henderson, 1895.

Ellerton: [pf]Stephen Edwardes, 1849.

Rolleston: [c]E. S. Goodrich, 1894; [p]H. M. Vernon, 1896.

The dates are those of election or award.

Several writers of note in literature and philosophy have been in recent years members of Merton: as, in the former subject, G. E. B. Saintsbury, [p]1863–68; Andrew Lang, [f]1868–75; J. H. Skrine, [f]1871–78; W. L.

Courtney, f1872–75; and in the latter, F. H. Bradley, f1870; L. T. Hobhouse, f1887–94; John Burnet, f1889-96.

### The Old Order and the New.

Has Oxford changed so rapidly in any century as in the nineteenth? Curious indeed seem the traditions of some of the former Fellows of the College. Foremost in this respect stands the name of "Mo" Griffith. Postmaster 1787, he was elected Fellow in 1795, and died aged ninety-one in 1859, being then senior Fellow of the College. Many tales are current concerning him:

"He used to attend the S. Mary's afternoon service. A prolonged University sermon had retarded the parish service, and it was near five o'clock when Copeland, who sometimes preached for Newman, approached the pulpit. He was stopped in the aisle by Griffith, who said in one of his stentorian asides, 'I am grieved to quit you, Mr. Copeland, but Merton College dines at five.'

"He spent the Oxford term-times usually at Bath—'City of Baths and Beggars' he was wont to superscribe his letters thence—hating the sight of the 'Philistines,' as he called the undergraduates. 'Fetch me a screen, Manciple,' he said one day, when, dining alone in hall, he beheld a belated solitary scholar who had not gone down; but he resided in the Vacations, and always attended College Meetings.

"Shortly before his death I met him at a Merton dinner. Edmund Hobhouse . . . had brought Sir Benjamin Brodie. 'Who is that gentleman?' asked Griffith in his sonorous whisper. He was told. A pause, during which Mo glared at the great surgeon; then the word 'Butcher!' was heard to hiss along the table. He comes before me in an unbrushed beaver hat, a black coat with waistcoat, nankeen trousers, and low shoes, with a vast interval of white stocking." *

The modern Fellow resides in term time, spends the Vacation abroad, and plays football in the College team.

* From "Oxford Memories," by "Nestor," in the *Speaker* of Oct. 29, 1898, by kind permission of writer and editor.

Two instances may be cited to illustrate the present service and activity of Mertonians in very varied spheres of interest: viz., F. C. Crump, Postmaster 1892–96, who was a prominent member of the College Rugby Team; took a first class in Honour Moderations 1894, and a first class in "Literæ Humaniores" 1896; was elected in open competition Fellow of Merton 1896, and into the Indian Civil Service that same year; and his brother, L. M. Crump, Postmaster 1893–97, who played half-back in the Oxford Rugby Team which defeated Cambridge 1896; took a first class in "Literæ Humaniores" 1897; and also was elected into the Indian Civil Service 1897.

### Close of the Century.

On December 28, 1880, the Warden Marsham died, being then in his ninety-fifth year, and on February 17, 1881, as his successor was appointed the Hon. G. C. Brodrick, Chancellor's English and Arnold Prize Essayist in 1855, and elected from Balliol Fellow of Merton on May 30 that same year. Owing in no small measure to his care and guidance the last seventeen years of the College life have been years of well-nigh untroubled peace and prosperity. If good fellowship, unity of College sentiment, and harmony of interests prevailing among all members of every rank and position in the College, may be regarded as guarantees of success, never could Merton College look forward to the coming years with greater confidence than to-day. "In omnibus et super omnia Unitatem et mutuam inter se Caritatem Pacem Concordiam et Dilectionem semper observent." The College is not unmindful of its founder's supreme injunction. For the seventh time in its history

Merton College stands on the threshold of a new century, nor through the slowly opening door can it catch a glimpse of what may lie beyond. But greater length of corporate life means greater present strength and resolution. The scroll of the very many years thus rapidly is lengthening behind it, and the centuries pass away. The College faces the future neither fearful nor forgetful.

STET FORTUNA DOMUS.

[*Note*.—The chief authority for the College history in the nineteenth century is the Merton Register, which is especially rich in details concerning the many and various reform movements in the College. To these, indeed, I have been able to render but scanty justice. Besides my use of the Register, I am especially indebted to the Warden for much information and many suggestions as regards the era of Commissions, 1850–1882.

As for the "Nineteenth Century Records," I have rather chosen to let Merton names, such as those of Lord Randolph Churchill, the Lord Chancellor, the Bishop of London, and others, speak for themselves than ventured on the unnecessary attempt to detail achievements and services familiar to the whole of the present generation. For such notable omissions as doubtless exist elsewhere in this Mertonian muster-roll, as mine alone is the responsibility for the selection, so my ignorance alone is cause of its incompleteness.]

MERTON COLLEGE, FROM THE FIELDS

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

# PART II

## *THE COLLEGE AND ITS BUILDINGS*

## CHAPTER I

### MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE

The Society of Merton College consisted originally of a Warden and "Scholars." Later were added the two other classes of Postmasters and Commoners, and the distinction between "Fellows" (Socii) and "Scholars" then gradually arose, though, as the Postmasters have always retained their very distinctive title, the word "Scholar" at Merton has very seldom been used in the narrower sense in which it is employed to-day at most other Colleges.

#### The Fellows.

The number of Fellows originally was limited to twenty, but the founder's later statutes set no bounds to a possible increase. Thus in 1284 they were as many as forty, a total never exceeded, while during the last three centuries about thirty has been high-water mark. To-day twenty-six is the statutable limit, and the number of actual and probationer Fellows is nineteen.

Originally the founder's kin enjoyed a prior right to election, if they satisfied the requirement of poverty. Those who were as yet too young were maintained at the College expense, and educated in the rudiments of learning at Nun Hall.

From these "pueri e genere fundatoris," if fit and proper persons, and when of right age, vacant fellowships were, in the first instance, to be filled up. This observance of kinship to the founder lasted to the sixteenth century. Thus in 1483 Edward Barnarde was elected on this ground, and in 1499 one Robert Heth was granted 40*s.* per annum from the corporate funds for this same reason, as in 1326 and 1346 two Heths had been actually elected Fellows. The last entry relative to founder's kin occurs in the register for the year 1577, when the father of one Richard Fisher claimed he should be chosen on this score. The College refused this, but elected him as "bonæ spei juvenis." By the 1857 code "kinship with Walter de Merton" as a ground of preference was finally abolished. The other qualifications for election originally were poverty, and birth in some diocese where the College possessed property. The former has never been entirely disregarded. Thus the acquisition of a "uberius beneficium" always necessitated resignation after a year's grace, as it does to-day, though the precise amount of the benefice which should disqualify was always liable to be a matter of heated controversy. The Visitor was often invoked to fix the amount. Thus Laud ordained £8 (clerical income) or £10 (lay) as the limit: Herring in 1754 £50 (in case of a living assessed by Queen Anne's Commissioners) or £80 otherwise. The amount rose to £300 in 1857 and £500 in 1882.

The "Diocese" limitation, re-enacted at intervals (as in 1536, 1589, &c.), was finally abolished only in May 1853.

The constitution of the electorate varied from time to time, but has always been based on the principle that the right of voting pertains to the seniors of the Society, the thirteen "simpliciter seniores," together with the Warden, being constituted, in 1274, the Electoral Committee, and usually so remaining. This rule, *e.g.*, was re-enacted by Archbishop Wake in 1716. The present rule, allowing all Fellows to vote who have completed two years from the day of their admission as actual Fellows, was passed in 1857 and re-enacted in 1882.

Election after examination seems first to have become the regular practice in the seventeenth century, nor did "influence" and "canvassing" finally cease to have any weight till 1857. But even the Queen's recommendation in 1632 was not able in itself to secure election. It has always been the custom at Merton to admit as candidates members of other Colleges. Thus, in 1688, out of seven elected two were Mertonians, the others coming from Lincoln, Exeter, Wadham, Magdalen Hall and S. Edmund Hall. Similarly, of six elected out of seventeen candidates in 1699, Merton and Magdalen claimed two each, and the others came from Lincoln and Brasenose.

In the present century the custom is fully maintained. The present senior Fellow, J. J. Randolph, belonged originally to Christ Church, as the present Warden to Balliol, and within the last half-century Merton has been recruited not only from its own Postmasters, but also from University, Balliol, Oriel, Queen's, New

College, Lincoln, Brasenose, Corpus, Christ Church, S. John's, Jesus, Wadham, Worcester, and Keble.

The election took place usually at the beginning of the College year, viz., August 1 or 2, up to 1828. In that year, because of the inconvenience of meeting in August, it was moved to the Friday in Easter Week; thence in 1840 to the Wednesday in Whitsun week; thence in 1866 to December 22; and, finally, October 7 was selected as the customary day of election in 1883, and so remains.

All Fellows from the beginning, save four or five, were bound to study theology, and all, of course, were originally "clerks." Spite of various reinforcements, such rules were mainly honoured in the breach at the beginning of the present century. The Commission of 1857 fixed the number of clerical fellowships at one-half of the whole. The College proposal in 1866 to reduce this to one-third was vetoed by Archbishop Longley, and again three years later by Archbishop Tait. The Commission of 1877–82 abolished every rule of the kind. The rule, repeated in 1859, that all Fellows must be members of the Church of England no longer exists. In 1852, a Fellow who joined the Roman Catholic Church had to resign. From 1274 to the present day all newly elected Fellows first passed a year of probation before being admitted "in perpetuam Societatem." Only in very rare instances (as, *e.g.*, in 1586, a mere "scholaris artium" was elected) have they not been either Bachelors of Arts or qualified for that degree. Each on election took an oath of obedience, fidelity, and secrecy. This remains to-day in a modified form, and shorn of most of its solemnity. In the fifteenth century the two junior Master Fellows were deputed by

the Society to instruct the new-comers in the rules and customs of the House. On admission to full fellowship it was for long the custom for the promoted Fellow to entertain the rest at a banquet. In 1681 this was commuted for a fee of £5 to the Library. But in 1685, though the fee continued, yet permission was graciously accorded the newly admitted to show their gratitude by the customary hospitality. To-day alike the instruction, the banquet, and even the fee to the Library, have been ruthlessly swept away, the last being transformed from a rule to a mere invitation in 1893. This was the result of a sudden agitation. Yet such contributions to the Library could already, in 1572, be spoken of as an "old custom," Fellows then paying 40*s.* on first election and £3 6*s.* 8*d.* on admission to full fellowship. Historical continuity is apt to suffer to-day.

Various causes, besides the acquisition of a "uberius beneficium," involved the loss of a fellowship from the earliest times. The rule of 1264 that if a Fellow became a monk he forfeited his place was stringently enforced throughout the fifteenth century. Thus in 1497 five were elected, but only four were admitted full Fellows in 1498, the fifth in the meantime having joined the Carthusian monastery at Wytham. Marriage, of course, always involved the surrender of a fellowship. Both these causes, the latter especially, led to many vacancies. Hence the College was enabled to recruit its numbers ever afresh, and encourage learning ever steadily throughout the University. For the entry of 1496 is certainly typical: "This year two Fellows resigned, one for a beautiful living, the other for a beautiful wife." The latter is now no legal disqualification, whether the holder of a fellowship intends

research, or the teaching of and friendship with undergraduates.

Fellows were bound originally both to teach and to study. The teaching was confined to Merton, save that by a rule of 1484, repeated with slight change in 1897, a Fellow might take work at other Colleges if he obtained permission.

By the last two codes of statutes various classes of Fellows have in practice been created, viz.: Honorary Fellows, who receive no emolument nor can vote; Fellows who are also College tutors or lecturers; "research" Fellows; Professors who are ex-officio Fellows; and lastly the so-called "Prize" Fellows. The "seven years'" limit of tenure has applied in practice chiefly to the last class, who are a result of the Commission of 1877–82. To-day at Merton there exist three Honorary, seven Tutor or Lecturer, two research, two Professor, and five "Prize" Fellows, besides three others who were elected before the last Commission. Many changes, indeed, have been introduced in the era of Commissions. Perhaps it is not too much to say that, whereas originally all Fellows were pledged by statute both to teach and to study, since 1882 a minority have been statutably compelled to teach, and a small minority to study.

The custom that every Fellow on vacating his fellowship presents a piece of plate "in usum Sociorum" seems to date from the Restoration.

### The Postmasters.

The Ordo Portionistarum at Merton College owes its origin in the year 1380 to John Wyllyot.

Perhaps, however, a precursor of the Merton Postmaster may be found in the "boy of the founder's kin"

who was maintained by the College in a separate house under "supervisores" from 1274–1460, and trained in the rudiments of education. The College

"maintained them in cloaths, linnen, shoes, inke, paper, victualls, and other necessaries for humane life."

Indeed, the bills for mending shoes for these boys were many and long. In 1435 there seem to have been but two remaining, and the College paid "Nicholas Coke, Manciple of Lion Hall," 2*s.* for their maintenance. After 1460 no more is heard of them.*

In like manner the nine poor boys of Wyllyot's foundation were from 1380 housed and trained separately, but maintained and brought up in close connection with the College.† One of the Fellows was appointed as their "Principal" to exercise discipline and supervise their studies. Their nomination seems to have been in the hands each of one of the senior Fellows. Two "exhibitioners" of the College were bound to lecture to them. These were the "Hampsterley" Exhibitioner, who read "res dialectica," and the Wyllyot. The latter was a Bachelor of Arts (to be distinguished from the Wyllyot Bursar) and lecturer to the Postmasters during the last half of the sixteenth century. By 1643 his office had been amalgamated with the Bursarship. The former resulted from the bequest of Ralph Hampsterley, Fellow in 1476, who provided moneys to maintain a chaplain or an exhibitioner with 26*s.* 8*d.* annually, to be chosen from Durham diocese, or, failing this, from as near that diocese as possible. In 1561 this exhibitioner was

* *Cf.* Wood, M.S. Ballard, 46, p. 68. "Mert. Arch." ii. 17, fol. 27. Rogers, "Prices," ii. ix.

† See for details, Part i. cap. 2, pp. 54–56.

appointed to lecture to the Postmasters. His office, too, by 1643, became a mere sinecure, and its revenue was enjoyed by a Fellow.*

The Postmasters at this time can have been little more than boys. Their number, originally nine, varied slightly with the number of the senior Fellows permitted to nominate, till in 1575 it was fixed at twelve. Just about this time they were moved into Merton College from Postmasters' Hall. In 1559 no Postmaster was allowed to sleep outside the Hall on pain of a fine of 8*d.*, a sum equivalent to the cost of a Sunday's whole commons. The Hall, we are told, gave great opportunity "noctivagandi et ex arbitris vivendi." As in 1577 we find each Postmaster sleeping "in his Master's room," and the Hall was being rebuilt in 1580, it is clear the transference had taken place before 1595, the date usually assigned.

Each Postmaster on election took an oath to guard the interests and secrets of the House, and his duty was to wait upon the Fellows in Hall before his own dinner and supper, until 1627, when all took their meals together. They had also all to sing in Chapel as choir-boys, when they wore surplices over their ordinary costume of a long gown and white bands. Those who excelled in diligence and study had good hopes of election in due course to a fellowship.

A long succession of benefactions increased both the numbers and the allowances of the Postmasters. Three increases have been made since 1575 in their numbers. In 1604 John Chamber, Fellow 1569, Fellow of Eton 1582, left £1000 by will to the College to purchase lands, whose revenues should be devoted "for the

* "Mert. Arch." ii. 2, 240–42.

farther suppression of wickedness and superstition." To this end he directed that at Merton College should be founded therewith both scholarships and fellowships, to be strictly confined to Etonians. The holders of the former were to be nominated by the Provost of King's College, Cambridge, and the Provost of Eton jointly; of the latter by Merton College. In 1613 the College bought lands for the purpose as directed, and founded two Eton Postmasterships, the money, it seems, not sufficing to found an Eton fellowship as well. In 1754 a benefaction of £320 was received from Mrs. Dorothy Vernon, of Bourton-upon-the-water, to buy lands whose rents should be divided between the Eton Postmasters. Hence, till 1853, they received greater stipends than the others. Their nomination remained in the hands of the Provosts of King's College, Cambridge, and Eton, till 1882, when the right of election was transferred to Merton College. To-day the two Chamber Postmasterships are still awarded to "candidates educated for not less than two years in the School of Eton College."

In 1732 Henry Jackson ordered that the rents of his lands at Yarnton and Littlemore should be accumulated to reach £900, which sum should be given Merton College to found four new scholarships there for boys born in Oxford city or county, and educated at Westminster, Winchester, or Eton. The advowson of a living was also to be purchased, to which one of his four scholars should enjoy first right of presentation. They were to wear the same caps and gowns as the Postmasters, and sit in Hall at either their table or the Commoners'.

Practically this was equivalent to the creation of four new Postmasterships of slightly less value, bringing the

whole number up to eighteen. At this number it stood in 1851. In 1853 the Jackson scholarships were made in value equivalent to the other Postmasterships, and all restrictions as regards candidates abolished. In 1866 the two Bible Clerkships, which in Anthony Wood's day had been of superior value and prestige to the Postmasterships, but had become greatly inferior by 1851, were converted into two Postmasterships, the whole number of which thus amounted now to twenty. This was reduced to eighteen by the Commission of 1877–82, and at this number it now remains. In 1868 all religious tests hitherto imposed at election were abolished.

The allowances and commons of the Postmasters were augmented by various benefactions. Thomas Jessop, formerly himself Postmaster, and then Fellow, in accordance with a long-standing promise made first in 1596, in 1614 imposed an annual rent-charge of £20 on his estates for this purpose. As a result of this, the money expended on the dinner and supper of every Postmaster on each day of the week save Friday (hitherto 1*s.* 10*d.* [besides beer] for each meal) was now increased to 3*s.* 5*d.* for dinner and 3*s.* 6*d.* for supper.

In 1665, Charles Sedley left his estate at Tetsworth, valued £500, for the same purpose. In 1676, Edmund Arnold bequeathed an annual sum of £20 for the maintenance of poor scholars at Merton. This in 1832 was devoted to a special exhibition. And in 1732 Edward Worth, Commoner in 1693, bequeathed £2000 to buy lands, the rents of which should be mainly devoted to increasing the annual payments made to each of the then fourteen Postmasters by £5, or more if possible.

These various benefactions have all since 1882 been merged in the general corporate property of the College. But inasmuch as in an age of competition and examination the present fame and success of a College depends very largely on its Undergraduate scholars; inasmuch as the social life, good order, intellectual activity and education, and very often, happily, the athletic interests, of any College are the more ably promoted the more numerous such scholars found in the House; in particular, inasmuch as Merton College has always had cause to be very proud of its many generations of Postmasters, yet now possesses fewer of such scholars than many Colleges of far inferior antiquity and claim; it may perhaps be hoped that the coming century will so far excel the eighteenth as this excelled the nineteenth in the generosity of benefactors and remembrance of Mertonians devoted to this object, which concerns so greatly the welfare of the College.

### The Commoners.

The earliest statutable recognition of Commoners in the University is found at Magdalen in 1479. Eighteen years later Merton College first opened her gates to admit four. The experiment seems not to have been very successful, as in 1566 the College refused the Earl of Leicester's request to enrol on this footing a promising student of medicine. In 1607 the practice was revived, and as many as twelve "knights or gentlemen's sons" admitted. But this decree was rescinded in July 1616. The College declared experience had shown

"Rem esse noxiam bonis moribus Collegii, et ad corrumpendam veterem disciplinam plurimum tendere: præsertim cum dicti Comminarii ad gradum aliquem promoverentur in Universitate."

Three Commoners, however, survived in 1641, and nine years later it was agreed to take in not more than six under these conditions:

They must be sons of knights, baronets, or gentlemen.
Each must present a silver cup, value £5, to the College.
Their tutors must be surety for their battels.
Each must pay 8*d.* per week "pro decrementis."
All must attend disputations and lectures.
They must be under the control of the Principal of the Postmasters, who shall receive a penny weekly for this office from each.
None may enter the Masters' garden unless accompanied by a Master.

In 1652 the limit of six was abolished, and rooms were assigned to them, as to the Postmasters, in "Mob Quad." In 1656, as complaints were made because they dined at the Fellows' table, they were ordered always to dine at a table set apart for them in Hall. Different ranks were recognised early, viz., under the Commonwealth, a higher and a lower. The latter from 1661–1678 were altogether discouraged. The difference was one of birth, and issued in one of fees, the higher order paying to the Library more on admission. But all alike had to attend lectures, and in choice of rooms Postmasters always had precedence. They constituted three orders in 1790, of Noblemen, Gentleman-Commoners, and Commoners, this again implying a great difference of fees paid. In 1853 there were fifteen Commoners to twenty scholars and bible-clerks. Since then unnecessary distinctions have been abolished, and with the growth of the College buildings the number of Commoners has increased *pari passu*, till to-day to twenty Postmasters (two honorary) and twelve exhibitioners must be added seventy-three Commoners to make up the Undergraduate total, and champion the

College name in various fields alike of study and of exercise.

### Government of the College.

Merton College was from the first a self-governing community. All actual Fellows of the College not only possessed a voice in the administration of the common affairs, but were bound to serve the College with their judgment and often too by the discharge of various functions inside or outside its walls. True, certain matters, as the election of new members, the discipline of the House, and the selection of the three names to be presented to the Visitor on a vacancy occurring in the Wardenship, these were duties ultimately consigned to a Committee of Seniors, with, it seems, absolute powers. Otherwise the whole College formed both administrative and deliberative power; it appointed its executive, whose deeds it scrutinised and controlled; and it enjoyed full rights of legislation. It resulted that not only were the common interests from the first matter for the watchful care of each member, but that each Fellow might be called on to display practical ability and no small business capacity in the interests of the College.

Head of the whole Society in Oxford after 1274 was the Warden, who held office for life, unless resigning or deposed. His duties for long years extended to a general financial as well as administrative control. To assist him when present and represent him when absent one of the Fellows in 1274 was appointed to serve as Sub-Warden. The regulations of his appointment and tenure of office have been ever fluctuating. The office was for long an annual one, but re-election was

customary, till Laud forbade this in 1638. After Laud's rule had been long in force, in 1882 the Sub-Warden was made re-eligible for two years. It was from the first supposed that he must be one of the seniors of the House, he being second therein only to the Warden, as indeed his seat of honour in the College Chapel, instituted in 1503, still demonstrates to-day. A tendency, however, is lately visible to make the office one of rotation through as many of the governing body as possible, the "seven years from admission" limit of 1863 being lowered to three in 1897. It is probable this is not the last word on the subject. From 1482 to the present day it has been one of the Sub-Warden's chief functions to keep the College Register, in Latin from 1482 to 1738, in English since. In the seventeenth century it fell also to his lot to draw up for the College the annual financial statement of its position.

As has been seen, the three Bursars of 1274 became two in 1848, the "three or four" chaplains two in 1565, and the three Deans were merged in the office of Principal of the Postmasters in 1882, in accordance with a general tendency towards a simplification of offices. These officers have always been appointed annually at the beginning of the College year, which up to 1828 was the first of August in each year. After many subsequent changes, the College year for this purpose is now counted to begin on Whit Tuesday. There were always various minor officers, whose duties were also discharged by the Fellows. Such were those of "Garden-Master," still existing, and "Controller of the Brewery," an office in existence in 1483, but the functions of which were transferred to the Bursars in 1730. These minor

posts were filled up every year on December 31, when also all servants of the House attended in Hall after supper, delivered up their keys, and were re-instated if approved. Through many centuries it was the Senior Bursar's duty to open the proceedings on this day by the formula

"In hoc scrutinio haec tria sunt proponenda, Mores Servientium, Numerus portionistarum, electio hortulanorum."

Of this meeting there is still a survival, somewhat shadowy, for the first-named object.

The capitular meetings of the whole society were known as "Scrutinies." From the earliest times there seem to have been three in the year, apart from that of December 31, and the "election" meeting of August 1, viz., on the eighth day before Easter, the eighth day before Christmas, and the feast of St. Margaret on July 20.* Continuation by adjournment, even over several intervening weeks, was a frequent practice. Such chapters were held usually in the Hall. But we find them meeting also at times in the Library, the Treasury, where the Warden's chair of state is still preserved, the Warden's House, the Sacristy, and often in the Church at Holywell. From the eighteenth century to the present day, the Senior Common Room has been used for this purpose. Meetings were held at 8 A.M. or after evening prayers till the seventeenth century, since when the time of the former has advanced and the latter been discontinued. In 1839 the number of Capitular Meetings was reduced to two in the year, which is to-day the statutable number.

The finance of the College has ever been the subject of minute regulations, especially for the due audit of

* Not on June 10, as Pointer wrongly.

all finance officers' accounts from 1274. The money and plate of the College were kept from the first in the "Cista Jocalium" in the Treasury. The annual statement of the financial position of the College was first commanded in 1596. The "Finance Committee" was first appointed in 1880.

Long years ago in the creation of various loan-chests was established a means of aiding any Fellows who found themselves in temporary financial straits. From these, the Warden, a Fellow, a Postmaster, or even "Domus" itself, might borrow money, the limit to the amount varying with the borrower's position in the College. In earlier days the borrower had to deposit in the chest some piece of plate or book of greater value than the loan, swearing "Sicut Deus te adjuvet et sancta Dei evangelia" that the deposit was his own property. For unless the pledge were redeemed it was sold, usually after six months' interval. Later, a bond for repayment of a greater, or even (in 1640) twice, the amount was substituted. Chief of these chests were the Rede, a benefaction of the Bishop who gave us also the Library, and the Bodley, founded by Sir Thomas in 1613, the former containing £100, the latter 200 marcs. Every year, on August 1, three Fellows were elected to be "keepers" of either chest, each having a separate key, so that it might be opened only in the presence of all. (Even as the Treasury door to-day bears the mark of three locks, to which in old times each Bursar had one key.) Minor chests were the Wyllyot; the Lee (founded by Thomas Lee, of the founder's kin, Fellow in 1462, who in 1502 left £20 to found "Maister Lee's Huche" besides £30 for poor scholars); the Kemp (founded by the Bishop in 1494 for the purchase of

robes and gowns); and the "Parsons" (instituted 1750 for the purchase of advowsons). The last two were but funds set apart for special purposes. But the true loan chest continued in use even in the present century. March 21, 1809, is the last record of a loan from the Bodley chest, but keepers of both it and the Rede were appointed till 1840. Curiously enough in 1898 one of these two was recovered by the College, after long disappearance. It was then found to contain an old Bank of England £10 note and some spade guineas, besides various Fellows' bonds for repayment. The practice perished of disuse, rather than of any lack of usefulness.*

The Visitor of the College was originally the Bishop of Winchester, but from 1276 to the present day the Archbishop of Canterbury.† In a vacancy of the See the Crown has in times past claimed the right, and in 1486 the Prior and Chapter of Canterbury. On this last occasion the College in its perplexity consulted a jurist, Dr. Jane. His advice was pertinent:

"Let him doo without the gate of your College what him lykith. Sparr your gates fast, and let hym not cum in butt in the similitude of a good felow to say your ale, not to vysite. And then y trow ye shall conclude this trobyll for ever."

The Prior, indeed, whether treated as a "good fellow" or not, failed to make good his claim before the succession of Archbishop Morton to Canterbury stayed all further proceedings in the matter. The Crown, in its claim, has been more successful.

* Reg. *passim*, and "Mert. Arch." ii. 2, 229–235, ii. 23, i. 7.

† *Cf. supra*, p. 24.

# CHAPTER II

## THE CHAPEL

The Church of S. John the Baptist existed before Merton College was founded. As has been seen, the grant of it on September 13, 1266, by the Abbey of Reading to the scholars of the House of Merton marks one of the earliest stages in the process of acquiring the Oxford site. Of this Church little is known save that it stood on at least part of the site of the present College Chapel, and that as late as 1288 there was adjoining it an "anchorhold," *i.e.*, a small walled enclosure wherein an anchorite immured himself.*

In process of time this Church was pulled down and in its room was built the present College Chapel. This came into being in three stages: first the choir in 1294–7; next the transepts, finished in 1424–5; lastly the tower, which was in building 1448–51.

### The Choir.

Controversy on the date of the building of the choir has been acute. The facts are these:

There is still preserved a Bursar's roll for "the third part" of the fifth year of the reign of Edward I., *i.e.*,

* Mert. MS. No. 17. Wood, "City," ii. 503. Mert. Roll for 1288.

INTERIOR OF CHAPEL (CHOIR)

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

late autumn 1277,* containing a list of many "expensa necessaria." Among them occurs this item:

"Item lib. dño Robtõ capellõ xiiii$^{s}$ ix$^{d}$ pro dedicatiõ$^{e}$ sumn. altaris. Item lib. eid viii$^{d}$ pro sr̃altari$^{s}$ bn̄dicēd."†

That is, the sum of 15*s.* 5*d.* was paid Robert the Chaplain in 1277, for the expense incurred in a dedication of the high altar and its "Super altaria."

It is therefore argued that this date marks the completion of the building of the new choir, and indeed, when the transepts were finished in 1424 the altars there were dedicated.‡

An objection is made that if 1277 be the date of the choir, then this stands absolutely alone in English architecture as an example of pure decorated style (which all the chancel, and notably the wheel window at the east end, exhibits) at so early a date.§

But even architecturally this is very far from being the case.‖ Other buildings (as *e.g.*, Bishop Quivil's contributions to Exeter Cathedral) in the same style date back to the last thirty years of the thirteenth century.

There are, however, other Bursars' rolls of the time which throw a new light on an old controversy.

There are extant at least eight of such Merton accounts.¶ Not all can be dated with certainty. But some can. These are

(*a*) A fragment for the year August 1, 1294—August 1295, endorsed at the side "Ad novam ecclesiam."

(*b*) Walter de Codinton's expenditure of £14 14*s.* 2½*d.* on church building, dated 1296–7.

* The fifth year of Ed. I. is November 20, 1276—November 19, 1277.

† Mert. MS., No. 3612.

‡ Mert. MS., No. 3982.

§ Oxf. Arch. Soc., N.S., ii. 272–6.

‖ *Cf. Arch. Journal*, ii. 1846, pp. 137–144.

¶ These are in order Mert. MSS., No. 4055, 4060, 4059, 4058, 4055*b*, 4062, 4054, 4063.

Three others, of uncertain date, all concern the church:

(*c*) An account of £16 3*s*. 9*d*. paid "super opus ecclesiae," endorsed on the back, "Computus aedificationis ecclesiae."

(*d*) Walter de Codinton's expenditure of £35 17*s*. 1½*d*., endorsed but by a much later hand, "circa vestiarium."

(*e*) A fragment of "expensa novae capellae."

The dates suggested * are for (*c*) 1300; for (*d*) from 1293–1310; for (*e*) 1294–5; but there is obvious uncertainty within a few years.

The next two entries leave the cause of their very heavy expenditure uncertain:

(*f*) Walter de Codinton's expenditure of £91 4*s*. 7*d*. on building, dated August 1299—July 1300.

(*g*) An account of £79 18*s*. 10*d*. spent on building, dated January to July, but of uncertain year (suggested 1291 or 1302).

(*h*) Walter de Codinton's expenditure of £13 7*s*. 6½*d*. on building, dated 1300.

This last, however, specifies "novae camerae" among the sources of such expenditure. These are also mentioned in 1314. It is therefore possible that in the above accounts, where no precise building is mentioned, the money was spent not on the new church but on the new rooms, wherever these may have been building.

Lastly:

(*i*) A new altar is mentioned as being made in 1304–6.†

We may conclude:

(1) That a high altar was dedicated in 1277.

(2) That after 1290, and certainly between 1294–97 a "new church" was being built.

(3) That it was being fitted still in 1306.

Two more facts may be added in this connection:

* By Mr. W. H. Stevenson.

† *Cf. Arch. Journ.*, ii. 1846, p. 144.

(4) In the present chancel are fourteen decorated windows of geometrical pattern, besides the great east window. There is exact correspondence of form of each window with its opposite, and also between the first and fifth, second and sixth, third and seventh, on either side. Only the central or fourth window remains unreproduced, save by its *vis-à-vis*.

Each of these windows consists of three great lights with geometrical tracery, and contains much stained glass.* This glass in over five-sixths of the lights is original, and helps to the dating of the windows in two respects:

(*a*) Among the labels of the second and fourth windows, on both sides, appears the portrait of Elinor of Castile, first wife of Edward I., and the third, sixth and seventh windows on both sides display in the glass edge the three castles, the arms of Castile. Queen Elinor died in December 1290.

(*b*) Each of the side lights, except in the sixth and seventh windows on the south side, displays a kneeling figure, as the centre light that of S. Peter, S. Paul, or S. Nicholas. The kneeling figure bears a scroll on which is inscribed in every case (save the fifth window on the south side, which is modern):

"Magister Henricus de Mamesfeld me fecit."

The old catalogue† shows that Henry de Mamesfeld was Fellow in the reign of Edward I. and further says of him:

"Omnes fenestras laterales chori vitrari fecit."

* Their similarity to those in Cologne Cathedral, building from 1256–1327 (when the choir was consecrated) suggests some acquaintance on the builder's part with the German cathedral. *Cf. Arch. Journ.*, ii. 1846, p. 138.

† *Cf.* App. C.

His name first appears in the College accounts in 1288.* Chancellor of the University in 1309, he died in 1328.†

Therefore the glass in the choir window tends strongly to confirm the date 1294–7 suggested for its building by the Bursars' rolls. For Queen Elinor might most justly have been commemorated but a very few years after her death in the chapel of the college to which her husband was a benefactor.

(5) Lastly comes this somewhat suggestive fact. When the Abbey of Reading granted S. John's Church to the scholars of Merton, it was understood that the then incumbent, one William de Chetyngdon, should not be disturbed in his office, but only upon his death should the College appoint a chaplain, and thus the College Chapel and Parish Church be completely identified. Now, W. de Chetyngdon died in 1292, and on his death on November 2 in that year, Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln, confirmed the appropriation, and thus finally created that amalgamation which endured till 1891.

Surely, therefore, it is, in view of the above dates most precisely given, a not unwarrantable assumption that it was on the death of the old incumbent that the College set to work to pull down the old and build a new church. I conclude from all this evidence that the date of the present choir is 1294–97, and this is in no way impossible architecturally. It may be noted also that the sacristy (dated certainly 1311 ‡) is built against the choir buttresses in such a way as to presuppose the then existence of the present choir. §

* Wood. † *Cf.* Brodrick, "Mem.," p. 180.
‡ *Cf. infra*, cap. 4, p. 259.
§ *Cf. Arch. Journal*, ii. 1846, p. 141.

This conclusion leads to the rejection of the date 1288 also suggested (without any good authority),* and to the entire rejection of Anthony Wood's statement that the whole of the present church dates from the year 1424.† This is certainly erroneous. The whole evidence, and it is not inconsiderable, shows that the Chancel dates to the end of the thirteenth, and the Tower to the middle of the fifteenth century. Only the transepts were completed in 1424–25.

This conclusion leaves the "altar-item" unexplained. It has been suggested that the altar was moved when the work of destroying the old church began, and therefore was then re-dedicated.‡ But then it follows that the work of destruction began about 1276, and yet the first extant item of expenditure on the new building is certainly not earlier than 1290. This lapse of at least fourteen years is a great difficulty in way of the theory. I would rather suggest the following explanation. We know the year 1276 was the year of the solemn confirmation of both the founding and the constitutions of the College by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Lincoln.§ Surely a solemn re-dedication of the altars in the old church soon after might not have been altogether out of place, nor need this dedication involve any theory as to the building of a new church in that year.

Thus the present chancel, it seems, was erected certainly after 1290, and we may be so precise as to say it was in actual building in 1294–97, though it may not have been completed till 1304 or even a few years later.

* Willis and Clark, iii. 251.

† Wood, "City," ii. 71–73. Copied by Hearne in 1703, O.H.S., viii. 107, 108.

‡ Oxf. Arch. Soc. N.S., ii. 272–6. § Mert. MSS., 198, 235, 239.

### The Transepts.

The existing transepts display an interesting, yet perplexing, combination of thirteenth century Decorated, and late fourteenth or fifteenth century Perpendicular, style. The beautiful piscina in the south transept, all the lower arches of the Tower and those in the transepts, belong to the former style, but doors, outer base mouldings, and all the windows, to the latter. Now an item in a very long roll of accounts of one Walter, "Procurator of the Church of S. John of the Hall of Merton," runs as follows:

"Idem computat solut. Roberto de Halton et Johanni de Aumbresdon cemetariis in septimana Cathedrae Sancti Petri conductis ad faciend. Corbeltables ultra portam introitus v$^{s}$ vi$^{d}$ . . . et solut Johanni de Burcestre cementario conducto ad idem per eandem septiman ii$^{s}$ ii$^{d}$ et solut. clerico ecclesiae Sancti Michaelis Australis Oxon. ad deserviendum eisdem cementariis per idem tempus xv$^{d}$."

The date of this is certain, viz., Feb.–July 7, 1360.*

This Walter received some £49 in all for his expenses, the main bulk of which however does *not* seem to have been spent on church building. To-day there is but *one* door of entrance into the chapel over which are corbeltables, viz., that in the north transept opening upon Merton Street, where they may still be seen. And yet the door itself is late Perpendicular in style!

Again, in 1367–8, no less than £60 11*s.* was spent on some building in the chapel, including payments for stone from Taynton for building the wall "inter le logge et ostium ecclesiae," and wages paid to

"iii Carpentariis operantibus sub arcu occident Campanilis." †

* Mert. MS. 4099. Quoted also ap. "Arch.," ii. 1, fol. 49.
† Ap. "Arch.," ii. 1, fol. 50*b*.

The windows of the transepts are, as has been said, all Perpendicular. Each transept contains two on the east and one on the west, and a very great north window in the north transept faces a fine but less magnificent south window in the south. To these must be added the great west window, second in beauty to none in the whole church, save the window of the Catherine wheel at the east end. It is of twelve lights and contains many panes of old stained glass of the fifteenth century, *e.g.*, a small crucifixion; the head of an abbess with pastoral staff; and the small figure of a seraph standing on a wheel. To-day there exists in all these nine windows no other glass whereby they can be dated with precision. But in Wood's time this was not the case, for they then contained much beautiful glass which bore inscriptions of the donors.* Hence we know for certain that the west window of the south transept was put up in 1417 at the charges of John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury;† and the other windows bore inscriptions, viz.,

(1) Of the south transept: the two east windows:

(*a*) "Orate pro bono statu Rogeri Gatis qui hanc fenestram . . ."

(*b*) An inscription of the donor, John Forde, who gave £10 6*s.* 8*d.* "ad fenestras vitrandas."‡ Both Roger Gate and John Forde were Fellows in the reign of Richard II., 1377–1399.

The great south window is said, I know not why, to have been given by Archbishop Arundel. §

* *Cf.* Wood, "History," 35–36.
† Wood. MSS. Mert., 4a, 4c.
‡ Cat. Vet. and Wils.
§ Ingram, "Mert. Coll.," pp. 24–25

(2) Of the north transept: the first east window was given by Richard Baron and Robert Stoneham, Fellows under Richard II. and Henry IV.; the second east window, next the Tower, by John Mahu, Fellow under Henry IV.; and lastly the west window here by Vincent Wyking, Fellow from 1390.

Finally this fact may be noticed:

On November 6, 1424, the whole church then existing was "re-dedicated to the same saint as before."*

The accounts indeed of Elias Holcote,† then Sub-Warden, for August 1, 1424–August 1, 1425 show many sums paid "ad ecclesiam," and these include payments "pictoribus altaris xx$^{s}$," "pannis sacris ad tegenda altaria tempore dedicationis," and finally, "ad dedicationem ecclesiae et altarium iii$^{q}$ ob."

From all these facts I conclude that the two transepts are the result of superadding work in Perpendicular style on to early Decorated, the latter being at least as early as the choir (even exhibiting, perhaps, relics of the earlier Church), the former being at least a century later. The process of addition may have been begun by the middle of the fourteenth century, but the whole Church as it now stands (excluding the Tower) was not finally finished till 1424–25.

The statues over the North door represent almost certainly S. John the Baptist and the Virgin Mary.

One curious fact must be mentioned, as it involves a controversy with New College.‡

* Mert. MS., No. 261. Wood, "City," ii. 71–3.

† Mert. MS. 3982.

‡ *Cf.* on the controversy, (*a*) Ingram, 19–26; (*b*) Oxf. Arch. Soc., ii. 274; (*c*) Willis and Clark, iii., 258; (*d*) Maxwell-Lyte, 187–8.

It is well known that the usual form of the Oxford larger College Chapel is T-shaped, consisting of Choir and Transepts, but lacking a Nave. The credit for originating the model is claimed alike by New College and by Merton.

Now there is no doubt that William of Wykeham, when he finished his Chapel in 1386, of set purpose and intention omitted the nave. There is also no doubt that Merton College Chapel also omits the nave, but here comes in the curious fact that this was *not* the original intention of the builders. In the Western wall may to-day be seen two arches blocked with masonry,* and the intention to complete the building by adding a magnificent nave of due proportion with the rest of the structure (had which design been effected, it is hard to see what building in Oxford could have made any pretension whatever to rival the Merton Chapel) is evident in more ways than one. There are the two arches filled with ashlar. The West window is an afterthought, for it does not perfectly fit the arch, which was designed to be the entrance to the nave. That, for reasons entirely unknown, the Society suddenly abandoned the plan of a nave is also shown by the strong buttresses which are placed outside to replace the support of its continuing walls, whose teeth-stones are carefully united with these buttresses, and is shown further by the fact that the string course is abruptly discontinued along the walls of the blocked arches. Certainly it was with "consummate skill and judg-

The statement of (*b*) that "more careful (*sic*) research has proved the transept at Merton not begun till after his (Wykeham's) death," may now, I think, be considered to be demonstrably wrong.

* One of these is visible in Plate II.

ment"* that the transepts were added on to the Choir, and form with it so perfect a unity, though in part of so different a date. But the abandonment of the design to build a nave was sudden, and has left very obvious traces.

Did, then, Merton College abandon the design after 1386, because New College had just proved the adequacy and excellence of the T-shape? This would at once supply the motive, and the known dates of the west windows, 1390 and 1417, it must be confessed, tend to strengthen this view. True, the new work upon the Merton transepts *may* have been begun *before* Wykeham finished his Chapel, and it is possible that, for causes unknown, the plan of a nave was abandoned before the transept windows were built. I cannot honestly think this the more likely. It must seem to me unwise, as most certainly it is unnecessary for the greater glory of antiquity of the College (for how could this be greater?) that Merton should challenge the New College claim to priority in this single respect. The far greater antiquity, the beauty of the Merton Chancel, the massive strength of the Merton Tower, these may well compensate for the honest abandonment of a probably untenable claim.

### The Tower.

There remained to build a new Bell-Tower, a need recognised before the Church was newly dedicated. On the back of a Sub-Warden's roll of September 1422 is written this note:†

* Ingram.

† "Arch. Mert.," ii. 1, fol. 68.

Videtur expediens . . . quod incipiatur Aedificium Campanalis dum plures sunt viventes qui notabiliter valde ad illud Aedificium promiserunt et per continuos sociòrum Decessus plura omittuntur quae ad illud Aedif. leviter acquiri possent, si semel fuerit inchoatum, et videtur pro meliori quod in omni anno leventur de silvis Surreianis ad usum Praedict . xx$^{li}$ . et sic ipsae silvae bene possunt opus Eccl$^{ae}$ in perpetuum continuare."

Indeed, in 1426–27, there is mention of the building of the Campanile.*

Whether it was, however, that the work progressed very slowly, or that it was suspended for a time, it is certain that the present Tower was being built from May 1448 to at least November 1451. Two long rolls exist to prove this.

The first exhibits the accounts of Thomas Edwards, the "Supervisor operis," from May 20, 1448, to May 9, 1450. It first states the receipts for the building of the Tower derived from various sources, including many private subscriptions. These all amounted to £134 8*s*. Next it details the expenditure, giving the most minute particulars, as the name of every mason who worked for so many weeks at such a rate of wage (usually 3*s*. 4*d*. a week); the cost of the stone, and its carriage from Teynton or Headington, and of all the other various material used. The Headington stone was used for the rough work of the Tower, the Teynton for its dressing.† The iron came from Chipping Norton, the timber mainly from "Horham Wode." The total expenses for ninety-two weeks of the work and materials amounted to £141 19*s*. 4½*d*., leaving a deficit of £7 11*s*. 4½*d*.‡

* "Arch. Mert.," ii. 17, fol. 9.

† Rogers, "Prices," iv. 466–7.

‡ Mert. MS. 4103, transcribed also in Rogers, "Prices," iii. pp. 720 *sq*., and in O.H.S., xviii. pp. 314 *sq*.

It has been suggested that we should multiply this total by twelve to represent its equivalent in the value of money to-day. This leads to the comfortable Ruskinian conclusion (as the Tower could scarcely be built to-day for £1700), that men in those days loved their work, and "worked for employers, not for contractors."*

But here we are on the verge of the very popular error of supposing that this account represents the whole total expended on the Tower. Once and for all let it be said that this is *not* the case.

There is at least one other account of Thomas Edwards, from March 14 to November 20, 1451, showing an expenditure of £43 10*s*. 4½*d*. on thirty-six weeks' labour and more materials.† That this follows immediately after the former account (which ended in May 9, 1450) is shown by the mention in this later account of the former's adverse balance of £7 11*s*. 4½*d*. Nor is there any proof that there was no further expenditure after this of 1451, though no other later account seems to-day extant. But at least the total spent in 1448–51 is now known certainly to amount to £185 9*s*. 9*d*. It is also known certainly that the library cost to build at least over £450 three-quarters of a century earlier.‡ It is therefore but probable that even now we have not the full total of the expenses of building the Tower. As Wood rightly says, "The Campanile was not built or finisht 1451."§

These, then, are the dates for the building of the Chapel:

* Rogers, "Prices," i. 259.
† Mert. M.S. 4103b.
‡ *Infra*, p. 228.
§ Wood, "City," ii. 72.

Choir: 1294–97, and perhaps later.

Transepts: part thirteenth century; finished 1424–25.

Tower: begun by 1448; finished soon after 1451.

Beautiful as is the Choir, the glory of the Merton Chapel is its Tower. None who have lived for however brief a time under its protecting shadow; who have looked up to its pinnacles soaring up over the little quadrangle nestling beneath into the dark blue cloudless sky on some midsummer morning, or seen it cut clear against the purple on a night of full moon, strong as some great rock in the Tuscan sea; who have known it at dawn first clothe itself slowly with the delicate rose of the morning, and then flash back the gold of the sun; none after such visions of delight may fear the challenge of its rival and imitator Tower in the East. Their pride is unshaken; their confidence not to be assailed.

### The Chapel before the Reformation.

At an early date two chantries are said to have been founded, one by Richard Hunsingore in 1317, the other by Robert Trenge, Warden, in 1349. The latter was in "Our Lady's Chapel," which is said to have stood on the south of the Church on the site of the present kitchen yard, and to have been used by the society for week-day services.* But another account identifies this with the present Sacristy,† the door into which from the east end of the Choir was blocked with masonry only when this room was converted into a brew-house in 1827.

* Wood, "City," ii. 73; Hearne, O.H.S., viii. 108.

† Ingram.

Under Warden Fitzjames' care the Chapel took its final shape before the Reformation. By 1490, besides the high altar of S. John the Baptist in the Choir, as many as four others also existed. One had been built in 1304.* Those of S. Jerome and S. Andrew stood outside at the entrance to the Choir, the former on the south, the latter on the north, under the great Rood-Loft, and were consecrated in 1488. That of the Virgin Mary was in the South Transept,† as was the altar of S. Catherine. The double canopy over the recess, "terminating in a beautiful Catherine-wheel, with two cinquefoil benetiers below,"‡ remains to-day to show where this last-named altar stood. At this time the College reserved to the use of its own members the Choir and South Transept, the North Transept being set apart for parish purposes, as the graves of parishioners therein to-day show. The high altar was given a precious reliquary, containing actual relics of S. John, by Warden Fitzjames, in 1489.

It was also while Fitzjames was Warden that the great Rood-Loft was built. This was begun in September 1486, and finished June 1488. It was erected by John Fissher, "citizen and joiner of London," and was modelled with improvements upon the screen of Magdalen College Chapel, and also upon that in the Church of S. Mildred's in the Poultry, London. In it were placed carved figures of S. Jerome and S. Andrew, and the new altars of these saints were built underneath. For this work Fissher received £27 besides maintenance.§ Then in December 1490 this new

* *Cf. Arch. Journal*, ii. 1846, p. 144.
† Mert. MS. No. 133. ‡ Ingram.
§ Mert. MS. No. 2967 and Reg.

"Pulpit of the Crucifix" was handed over to the care of "Henry the painter," who finished his work on April 28, 1491, receiving £16 13*s.* 4*d.* besides twenty marcs for materials. This rood-loft was replaced by an oaken screen in the Corinthian style, the gift of Alexander Fisher, in 1671, whose interstices were filled with glass in 1752. Some of its unhappy fragments were given to All Saints' Church in 1891.

It was also under Fitzjames in 1497 that the Choir was new ceiled with wainscot and new choir stalls were built, replacing those of 1394, the gift of Walter Romnysbury.* The new seats were largely the gift of John Marshall, Bishop of Llandaff. Every stall had painted on its back

> "the effigies from head to foot, with antique habits and antique coverings for the head, of a greater or lesser prophet or apostle or some saint; each having a scroll coming out of their mouths winding over their heads, containing a sentence from the Belief, Pater Noster, &c., till all was done, even to Amen."

Daubed out under Edward VI., repainted, daubed out again under Cromwell, and re-appearing, they were finally obliterated in 1659.†

The great brass lectern, still existing, was the gift of John Martok, Fellow in 1458, though it was not obtained till after his death, viz., in 1504. It exhibits on both sides the dolphin of Fitzjames.

Finally, the transepts were newly ceiled in 1517–1518, and thus the renovation and decoration of the Chapel in the pre-Reformation era was completed.

* *Cf.* "Cat. Vet." fol. 64.

† Reg. Wood, "Life," i. 309, and ap. Gutch. App. 220–221.

### The Chapel after the Reformation.

Save for the disappearance of the altars from the ante-chapel, and the exchange of the organ set up in 1489 for the two globes now in the Library in 1567,* the Reformation seems to have changed the aspect of the chapel very little, and for many years little is said of it. A new organ was bought for £30 in 1633, and the choir was newly paved with marble in 1634–5. But a great disaster, occurring soon after, led to very many alterations. There are in fact three great stages in the history of the chapel after its completion, viz., the Tudor (Fitzjames), the Later Stuart, and the Victorian.

### The Later Stuart Age.

At nine o'clock of the evening of October 17, 1655, "caelo sereno et imperturbato," the roof of the South Transept fell in "ingenti cum fragore," shattering the pavement underneath and damaging the monumental brasses there. The work of restoration here completed (Anthony Wood zealously striving for the preservation of the brasses from the vandal hands of the British workman †), the old chime of five bells next called for attention in 1657. Warden Henry Abyndon had presented the College with the great tenor bell, doubtless when the chapel was re-dedicated in 1424, and some at least of the other four bells were said to be older than 1266. These had been rung from the ground, but for some years past "squalore obsita tacite jacebant." Hence in January 1657, they were handed over to the

* 1567 Reg. 1577 acc. to Wood, MS. Bodl. 594, p. 144. 1677 (!) acc. to Pointer, p. 27.

† Reg. and Wood, "Life," i. 191.

founder, and converted into a peal of eight. Moreover in April the College gave the order that a bell-ringers' gallery should be built in the tower fifteen ells above the ground, and a door broken through into it from the tower staircase.

These changes did not please the Oxford antiquarian.

"The tenor or great bell . . . was supposed to be the best bell in England, being, as 'twas said, of fine mettall silver found. The generality of people were much against the altering of that bell, and were for a treble to be put to the five: and old sarjeant Charles Holloway, who was a very covetous man, would have given money to save it, and to make the five six bells. . . . But by the knavery of Thomas Jones the subwarden (the Warden being then absent) . . . they were made eight, and Dr. John Wilson, Dr. of musick, had a fee from the College to take order about their tuning."

There is, however, no doubt that the old bells were in an unsatisfactory condition, *e.g.*, the third bell had had to be repaired as far back as 1575. Wood himself recognised this by subscribing £5 towards their re-casting, and he himself was apt in bell-ringing. But the work was badly done.

"May 14, 1657.—All the eight bells of Merton Coll. did begin to ring. And he heard them ring very well at his approach to Oxon. in the evening, after he had taken his rambles all that day about the country to collect monuments. The bells did not at all please the curious and critical hearer."

"Several," Wood adds elsewhere, "were found to be ugly dead bells," and he accuses the bell-founder Michael Darby and the unhappy Sub-Warden for this.

"Darby stole a great deal of metal from them, and Thomas Jones they say complice with him."

It is certain that the College, in July 1680, entrusted the new bells to Christopher Hudson of S. Mary Cray,

Kent, for entire re-founding. The gallery too was found to be built of bad timber, and had to be re-built, and was in 1675 moved above the top of the arches of the tower, whereas in 1657, despite Wood's protests, it had been built below this. A window was broken through the tower on the side next Corpus to give light. So, finally, on February 2, 1681, the Merton College eight bells "rang to the content of the society." Thus the present belfry and bells date back to 1675 and 1681. Minor restorations were effected in 1885 and 1892. To-day the bells are rung as a peal but rarely; yet no chime in Oxford is more melodious, nor may any more justly claim to give "content to the society," especially when heard at some little distance.*

A few years before this the aspect of the choir had been entirely changed. In 1671 Alexander Fisher, Fellow for many years, left a legacy of £1000 to be spent on beautifying the chapel and filling the east window with stained glass. With this money and £100, given by Bishop Reynolds, the choir was newly paved with black and white marble, its roof repaired and decorated, the new Jacobean screen built near its entrance, and finally new stalls were erected, the old being removed to the ante-chapel. This last change was not wholly a gain. For the new woodwork of the stalls, however beautiful in itself, yet obscured the bottom of the chancel windows, and they were obviously inharmonious with the rest of the structure. Moreover the workmen employed were always a danger. This had been shown in 1659 when

* Mert. MS. No. 2052; Wood, "Life," i. 211–212, 219, ii. 332, 515.

"While the workmen were performing this work, several of the brass plates with inscriptions on grave stones were most sacrilegiously torn up and taken away, either by some of the painters or other workmen then working in the chapel. A. W. complained of these things to the fellowes, and desired them to look after the offenders; but, with shame let it be spoken, not one of them did resent the matter, or inquire after the sacrilegists, such were their degenerated and poore spirits." *

So two of the old stalls also, on which was still painted the kneeling effigy of Bishop Marshall their donor, were removed to the library, but these too were "were taken away from thence by workmen in 1683." † It has indeed already been seen that the end of the seventeenth century reflects but little credit on the College.

While these repairs were in progress, the society celebrated divine service in Hall. They returned on December 14, 1673, to the newly paved and wainscoted chapel.‡

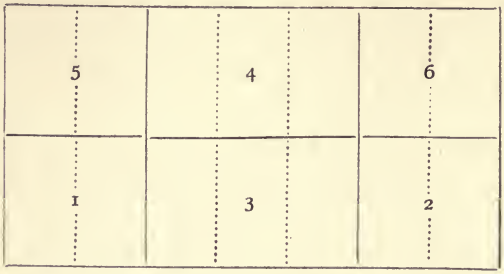
Finally, in 1702, new glass was inserted in the lower half of the east window.§ It still bears this inscription:

"W. Price pinxit. Expensis Mri. Alexand. Fisher hujus Coll. quondam socii. Aº Dⁿⁱ MDCCII. Custode Ricardo Lydall."

Lydall contributed towards the expense, and his arms, with Fisher's, may still be seen in the upper part of the window. The window exhibits six subjects, three above and three below.‖ The middle painting in each case is divided into three lights, the side into two. The

* Wood, "Life," i. 309.
† Wood, ap. Gutch, App. 221.
‡ Wood, "Life," ii. 256, 274.
§ Reg. *cf.* Gutch. "History," p. 18N.
*Cf.* Plate VII.

following diagram represents the arrangement (drawn to scale):




1. Nativity. 2. Baptism. 3. Last Supper. 4. Crucifixion. 5. Resurrection. 6. Ascension.

It cannot be said that the colour of the 1702 glass harmonises well with the prevailing tone in the chapel.

Thus by 1702 the chapel presented a very altered appearance. Only one other addition in the eighteenth century merits record. In July 1779 John Skipp, Gentleman-Commoner, presented the altar-piece, a painting of the crucifixion. The constant tradition that this is a work by Tintoretto is mentioned as far back as 1810,* and is very possibly true. That the picture is of the Venetian school is obvious.

The well-known view of the interior of the chapel from the "Oxford Almanack" of 1802,† presents a perfect picture of the choir as it existed after its remodelling in Late Jacobean style. In it may be seen the black and white marble floor and Jacobean stalls. The wooden pulpit now in the ante-chapel stands at the north end. The altar-rail is not that now existing. There is no obstructive pyramid of wood encasing the

* Reg. and Chalmers, i. 15.

† Ap. Skelton, "Oxonia," ii., Plate 102.

altar-piece, and hiding part of the east window, as to-day.* And the four mural monuments which now rest in the ante-chapel, then were placed at the east end—viz., on the east wall, Earle's on the north answering Fisher's on the south, and Bodley's large monument on the north wall facing Savile's cenotaph on the south.†

In this state the chapel continued till its final remodelling in

### The Victorian Era.

As preliminary facts of interest may be noted the repair of the pinnacles of the Tower in 1822, the providing of a new communion table, cushions and prayer-books in 1824, and the first warming of the chapel by stoves in 1823–4. In 1827 the wall on the north side of the graveyard was removed in favour of the present low wall topped by an iron railing.‡ In 1841 an iron railing was also substituted for the earlier stone wall at the entrance to the graveyard from the quadrangle.§

In 1842 began a period of busy restoration, during which the distinctive seventeenth-century features disappeared. The whole of the stalls and their upper panelling were removed, the latter being given, in 1847, "for fitting up of a chapel attached to a school at Radley," the former being placed in the ante-chapel.

* This was "recently erected" in 1852 (Oxf. Arch. Soc., 1852, p. 63), and is an unnecessary blemish, as seen in Plate VII.

† *Cf.* Wood, "History," 19–28. "Life," ii. 233, 234.

‡ See the old wall in Plate 72 of Skelton's "Oxonia," vol. i. (date 1772).

§ See the old arrangement in Plate 88 of the same, vol. ii. (date 1788).

Here some of them remain, but others were given to the Warden in 1868. In their place were erected the present stalls in 1851. The choir was newly paved with marble and encaustic tiles in that same year. This is the present pavement. All the monuments were removed from the choir to the ante-chapel, where they remain. On the other hand, two most beautiful monumental brasses which, together with similar brasses long since lost, hitherto had been set in the floor of the transepts, were removed, in the long vacation of 1849, to the east end. The choir to-day has three levels, the lowest, of the stalls, the second, between stalls and altar-rail, and the third and highest, of the communion table and space before it. The two brasses are placed in the second, whither too the lectern was moved in 1888.* The brass to the north commemorates John Bloxham, Warden 1375–87, and John Whytton, Benefactor, and bears this inscription in three lines:

"Hic jacent magist.' Johēs Bloxham Baculari' sacre theologie quondā Custos huiⁱ | Collegii, et Johēs Whyttoñ Rector Ecclīe de Wodetoñ et huiⁱ Collegii Benefactor | qui lapidem istū fecit suis ꝑprijs sumptibus ordinari. quorum aiābus ꝑpiciet dⁱ̄. Amen."

That to the south is nearly a century later and commemorates Henry Sever, Warden 1455–71, with this inscription in three lines:

"Hic jacet Magister Henricus Sever sacre Theologie ꝑfessor ac quondam Custos istiⁱ Collegii | et de progenie Fundatoris ejusdem Collegii et ut fundator et precepuus benefactor iꝑius Collegii | qui obiit sexto die mēs Julii dñi Millīmo cccclxxiᵒ. Cujus anime propicietur deus amen."

Similar brasses once existed to Wardens Wantynge, Trenge, and Durant, under the Tower, at the entrance to

* *Cf.* Plate VII. This lectern is John Martok's.

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the choir—as the incisions to-day still show. These were plundered in that year of carelessness 1659.

Besides these changes in the paving, stalls, monuments and brasses, the choir roof in June 1850 was being newly painted and adorned under the personal supervision of J. H. Pollen, one of the Fellows.* Thus it took upon it the decoration it presents to-day. The wooden cover and crane were added to the old font in 1851. The tapestry hangings for the walls above the new stalls were bought in 1852. And finally the screen disappeared and at the entrance to the choir was built in 1851 the present very plain and very ugly "garden wall," though redeemed in part by its gates. But for this, the restorations and alterations were well conceived in their design of going back behind the Jacobean age, and the appearance of the chapel to-day is one greatly improved upon that it presented a century ago. Since this date the changes made have been but slight. Under Sir Gilbert Scott's direction in 1876–7 the chapel was re-decorated, and the present arrangement of seats was introduced, whereby the postmasters sit in the upper stalls at the east end, and the Commoners in the lower seats. The undergraduates' offer of an altar cloth in this same year 1876 was accepted. Finally, in 1888, one new row of seats and desks was provided on each side below the rest, and the new altar-rails of 1875 were moved to their present position on the highest level in the Chancel.

### Services and Music.

The Chapel has for at least two centuries been lighted by candles only. Before the 1842 restorations, long

* This decoration is visible in Plate VII.

chandeliers containing these were hung from the centre of the roof.* Now each desk has its small branches. Nor could many effects more impressive be found than the sight of our chapel when the blackness of the magnificent choir's height is pierced by but a few candles' rays at the ten o'clock service on a dark winter's night. There was, in 1859, one terrible moment when the architect's proposal to put gas in the chapel was actually accepted by the College! Most happily it was never carried into effect. It may well be hoped that future generations will cleave to past practices, resolutely condemning this as other yet more alarming proposals concerning the College buildings, which most seriously threatened us in the last generation.

Once only in the week is there any music in the Chapel, on the Sunday afternoon service at 5.45. The present organ was placed in its position in the ante-chapel in 1872, and so long as the chapel continued to serve as the parish church there was more or less of a choral service for the parish at 3 P.M. Now, the choir consists of the Merton men only. This, combined with the far separation from the choir of the organ in its present position, must add to the regret that the old screens are gone, and the bare "garden-wall" flaunts itself in their place. Of late years this evil has been so far felt that projects for restoring the screen were discussed in 1879 and 1886, its fragments being actually set up in the ante-chapel in the latter year to see if any use could be made of them. This has proved, however, impossible. But two facts are manifest: the first, that as no chapel in Oxford can equal Merton chapel in massive simplicity

* *Cf.* the view of 1813, drawn for Ackermann's "History of Oxford." *Cf.* Reg. 1731.

and stateliness, nor can any, save New College alone, surpass it in length of chancel, so no chapel in Oxford can better merit that by a trained choir its services should be worthy of its architecture. And secondly, as the building of an organ screen is necessary for this purpose, so it would remove what are now the two blots on the chapel's beauty, viz., the "garden-wall" of 1851, and the appearance presented by the organ in its present position to-day. Once indeed, in 1765, a certain Mrs. Mary Sympson left £8500 stock as a legacy to the College "for founding and perpetuating a choir and erecting an organ in the chapel." If the College refused to devote the money to this object it should have none of it. But the College came to terms on that occasion with him who would be in that event the legatee, and, a bargain being struck, took about half the money and devoted it to quite alien objects.* It is indeed hard to imagine the College of to-day acting in like manner. For the chapel claims its choir-boys and its organ-screen, could this last (as surely it were not impossible) be made to harmonise with the beauty of the architecture. But for this, as for its new postmasterships, Merton College must needs await a new endowment in the twentieth century.

### The Monuments.

In the Chapel to-day are some 107 monuments or gravestones on the floor, and twenty-one which are mural. Others have disappeared since Wood's day. The finest are the two brasses now in the Choir, and already described. There are, however, four other fragments of brasses still preserved. In the S. Transept

* "Merton Arch.," ii. 2, 321–331.

is the half-length of a priest praying, with an inscription:

"Hic iacet Johēs Kyllyngworth Magist. in artibus qui obiit xvii° die Maij A° dñi m° cccc° xlv° cuiꝰ aīe ꝓpiciet' ieꝰ amē."

A beautiful little half-length of a priest holding in his raised hands chalice and wafer, just below the step leading into the choir under the tower, commemorates (it is now agreed, though the inscription in place is lost) John Bowk, who died April 11, 1519. A long inscription preserved in Gutch and Holland records this. The fine chasing-work is especially visible here in the rich vestments of the priest.

The other two brasses are in the North Transept. The one shows a small full-length figure in an open cross, its dress ecclesiastical and apparently unique, the hands joined, as in prayer. Whom this brass commemorates is uncertain, for the $\left(\frac{\text{R. W.}}{1686}\right)$ immediately below it clearly does not concern it at all. According to Hutton the fragmentary inscription once preserved concerning it showed a date 1372, but the name was lost. According to Wood, it commemorated John Wantynge, the fourth Warden. As he died in 1328 the accounts do not agree. Neither would it commemorate the Warden Robert Trenge, who died in 1351, or Warden William Durant, who died 1375, though both are known to have been buried in the Chapel.

Lastly, close to the above is a brass showing the upper part of a man down to his elbows in a light open cross. This bears on its verge an inscription in a Saxon letter, now much broken, which reads (when restored):

"Hic ja[cet] M[agist]er [Ricar]dus de Hake[born]e quondam r[ector] ecclesie de Wlfo[rd] cuius anime [p]ropicietu[r] [d]e[us] amen.

Richard de Hakeborne was Fellow as early as 1296, Sub-Warden in 1304, and died about 1311. This Merton brass is thus one of the very earliest brasses surviving in England.

The monuments to Bodley, Savile, Earle, and Fisher, have already been noticed. One to Anthony Wood is on the wall next the east door in the north transept. On the other side of this door is Woolner's marble monument to the martyr-bishop Patteson, erected in 1872. Other stones still exist to commemorate the Merton benefactors: Thomas Dollyng (1400); Ralph Hampsterley (1518); Joseph Watkinson (1720); and (mural) Henry Jackson (1727). And among many others, some most unimportant and out of place, may be mentioned those of Henry Briggs, John Bainbridge, and F. St. Clair Grimwood, Postmaster of the College, killed at Manipur Residency, March 24, 1891.* But the surest recollection of its members Merton retains by treasuring in the memory their services to State, to Church, to University, and to College.

* *Cf.* throughout Wood. "History," 19–28. "City," ii. 73. "Life," ii. 235. Gutch, pp. 29–35, and Herbert Hurst's "Account of the Sepulchral Monuments in the Chapel," in MS., presented by the present Warden to the College in June 1890—a very beautiful piece of work.

# CHAPTER III

## THE LIBRARY

The Merton Library to-day consists of the entire upper part of the south, and the greater portion of the upper part of the west, side of "Mob" quadrangle. It thus falls into two divisions, the western room and the southern, the entrance to each of which is formed by an oaken screen. They are joined by the "Vestibule," up into which a flight of steps leads, which forms the main approach from the south-west corner of the quadrangle. Another entrance is formed by a small door at the north end of the west room. The west room is 38½ feet long, the south 56½. The width is uniformly 20½ feet. The south room ends in an open space at the east end which is lighted by a window of two lights on the north, another like it on the south, and by a great east bow window of ten lights. The vestibule is lighted by two windows, a west window of two lights and a south arch of five. The library is besides lighted throughout by narrow equidistant lancet windows all of one light and trefoiled. Of these the west room has seven on each side and the south room ten. In pattern the windows of the south and west walls are the same and differ from those on the north and east sides, which again are like each other. Besides these, each room is lighted from above by two great dormer

INTERIOR OF LIBRARY (WEST ROOM)

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

windows, each of twelve lights, all looking into the quadrangle, *i.e.*, those in the west room facing east, and in the south room north. The ceiling throughout is of oak, vaulted, and its uniformity is broken only by the dormer windows. The oaken planks of the ceiling end in an ornamental cornice ten feet from the ground. In both rooms the side walls of the library hence to the ground are of plain stone. But the east end of the south room, the whole vestibule, and the north wall of the west room are square panelled with oak, the last named beautifully carved.* Above this panelling and above the great east window, where the arch of the roof meets the wall at the end of each room, there is elaborately decorated plaster work, adorned with inlaid and gilded panels bearing various arms, three at each end. The diamond shaped centre shield bears in each case the arms of the College. This is flanked in the west room by circular shields bearing the arms of Archbishop Whitgift on the west, and of Sir Henry Savile on the east,† in the south room by the arms in like manner of Archbishop Abbot on the north, and of Sir Nathaniel Brent on the south.

The walls of the vestibule and open space at the east end are lined with book cases. But the chief accommodation for books is supplied by the rows of oak cases standing out towards the centre of the room from both sides, a double case between each of the lancet windows. Each case measures $7\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ feet. There are twenty whole and two half-cases in the south, twelve whole and four half-cases in the west room. Between every two

* *Cf.* Plate VIII., which gives the West Room; note panelling at end, screen, and plaster work.

† Visible in Plate VIII.

cases, and thus opposite each window, runs a plain reader's bench 9 inches wide, those of the west room being more elaborately designed than those of the south. In each of the readers' compartments thus formed there is one sloping continuous desk projecting from one book-case, on which to rest the books in use. Each is nailed to rough brackets, and there is a slit 2 inches wide next to the case through which the lower chains were passed.*

The flooring of the whole library is of wood, save that the gangways, which run in the centre of each room between the rows of book-cases, are paved with encaustic tiles. A curious difference exists between the two rooms. While the level of the flooring throughout the whole library is, in the main, the same, the gangway of the west room is raised sometimes as many as 4 inches above the floor on either side, but that of the south room is usually on the same level, or even lower than the floor. Along each side of the gangway throughout, runs a raised wooden parapet set on stone, varying from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height above the gangway. Into this are fixed both cases and benches as well as a narrow plank for the reader's feet. All the book-cases throughout the two rooms are similarly ornamented with projecting cornices, and, on the top of the cornice where the cases abut on the gangway, with further picturesque wooden terminal pediments. But the height of the cases themselves, as measured from parapet to cornice, varies, those in the south room being each 74 inches high, those in the west room each 5 inches less. Owing, however, to the superior level of the gangway in the latter room, the cases in the former seem much

* *Cf.* below.

the more lofty.* The history of the process by which the Library took this, its present form and appearance, however difficult and complicated by uncertainties, can be traced here but briefly.

### Early History.

Originally the MSS. of the Society were kept in oaken chests, as was the monastic custom. Each chest was fastened by three locks, and thus not to be opened save in the presence of several members of the College. One at least of these chests is still preserved in the present Library. But also quite early there was a room set apart called the "Library." It contained these chests, a table on which certain books were chained, and desks. The rule of keeping the books under three locks dates back to 1276; the chaining of grammar books on a table to 1284; the "cista pro libris dialecticis" is mentioned in 1327; the "Library" in the famous scrutiny of 1338–9; and in 1354 there is this entry:

"In 1 Carpent . conduct . ad faciend . Palatia librariae et alia necessaria . et in iiii Mensis pro 'Deskis' in libr . ii$^{s}$. . et in 1 ledremaker sup . lib . p. ii dies et in hom . ad faciend . stepel . vi$^{s}$ viii$^{d}$."

The list of Fellows known to have given books to the College in the first century of its existence is a long one. But what exactly these "Palatia" (usually meaning lattice-work) were, or where was situated this first library, must remain uncertain.†

* Plate VIII. of the West Room is the best accompaniment to this description. The longer South Room, owing to its east window, cannot be photographed so well.

† *Cf.* "Mert. Arch." ii. 1, 45b, 38b; Gutch, Hist., p. 18 N; Chalmers, i. 11; Mert. MS. 4250; Wood, Hist. p. 5, is therefore wrong.

The present Library was newly built and presented to the College by William Rede, Bishop of Chichester (1369–86), in the years 1377–78. Universal tradition is confirmed, and the date supplied, by the Bursars' rolls of the time, detailing the building "novi aedificii," with stone chiefly from Teynton, and the expenses "circa novam librariam" at length. There are three of such "supervisores novi operis in Aula Merton" known—viz., John Lyndon, Geoffrey Potton, and John Rhysborough. Money was contributed not only by Rede, but also by Wyllyot, John Wendover, and others. The accounts as preserved may be summed up as follows:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ann. i. Ric. II. Lyndon, supervis. I. | Rec. | 166 | 0 | 0 | Exp. | 166 | 1 | 10 |
| Ann. i. Ric. II. Lyndon, supervis. II. | ,, | 192 | 14 | 4½ | ,, | 179 | 2 | 8½ |
| Ann. Feb.–May, 1378 Potton, supervis. II. | ,, | 40 | 0 | 0 | ,, | 39 | 16 | 3 |
| Ann. ii. Ric. II. Rysborough, supervis. II. | ,, | 63 | 7 | 7 | ,, | 65 | 6 | 5 |
| Tot. | ,, | £462 | 1 | 11½ | ,, | £450 | 7 | 2½ |

The Library and its fittings thus cost at least over £450 in 1377–8. Deducting those parts known to have been added later, it appears that of the present Library the entire shell (save the open space at the east end, the dormer and east windows, and the ceiling), the glass in the west room bearing the "Ecce Agnus Dei" labels, the rough-hewn benches, the cases in the west room (apart from added decoration) may with every probability be referred back to the time of Bishop Rede.* Thus Merton College exhibits probably the

* Mert. MS. 4102, 4102b; "Mert. Arch." ii. 1, fol. 51, 52.

oldest example in England of the true mediæval library. Other colleges later borrowed the Merton pattern, the best example being that of Corpus in the beginning of the sixteenth century.

At the east end of the south room was left what was called "a low chamber with a chimney." The precise form of this room is uncertain, neither is it clear how it could be described as "low." The inventory of about 1600 which mentions it shows too it possessed but one window of two lights facing the quadrangle and another of one light "towards the kitchen." It is therefore clear there then existed no great east window, and the argument that the present south window of two lights at the east end may have been added later would be a good one were it not for the great antiquity of the stone work. Indeed in form it imitates, *not* all the rest of the south windows, but the opposite north window. Pious tradition calls this "Cubiculum," now amalgamated with the Library, Bishop Rede's Chamber.*

### The Dormitory Theory.

That the two rooms forming Rede's library were ever used as a College dormitory † is utterly unlikely and wildly improbable. Absolutely the only argument in favour of the theory is the pure *a priori* one that the muniment room was large enough, the present Library much too large, for the few MSS. the College then possessed. Hence another use for the Library must be sought. Whereas this theory totally ignores the facts; (*a*) that the dormitory system seems unknown

* Mert. MS. 3124; *cf.* below, under date 1623.

† As suggested first, I believe, in Oxf. Arch. Soc. ii. 274–5, in 1871.

in any college in Oxford or Cambridge; (*b*) that it never seems to have been the custom at Merton for more than a very few to sleep together in one room; (*c*) that the new building in the accounts of the time (which the author of the theory does not know and dates wrongly) is definitely called the Library; (*d*) that the College can be proved to have then possessed, *not* a few, but very many MSS.; and finally (*e*) this fact. Every MS. was chained in its place, and thus *not more than three* could be read in any one compartment at one and the same time. It is a known fact, proved by the relics of the old chain system, that each book-case then contained but four shelves, two on each side, and none (as to-day) below the reader's desk. It is a known fact that the library contained very many MSS., perhaps even several hundreds, in 1376. Yet each compartment could contain but three readers at the same time.

"This accounts for the large rooms required in early libraries for so few books."

Therefore we find the University of Oxford petitioning Duke Humphrey in 1444 to help build a new library on the ground that any student poring over a single volume, as often happened, thereby kept three or four others away, so closely were the books chained together.*

Thus even the solitary *a priori* argument as regards Merton Library, is ignorant and worthless, and the whole dormitory theory may well be finally relegated back into outer darkness.

* *Cf.* Willis and Clark, iii. pp. 418 *sqq.*

### Later Additions.

After 1378 three great stages in the development of the Library to its present form may be noted, the second being by far the most important.

(1) In 1502–3 the present ceiling was constructed. There are entries in the College accounts of the expenses under the superintendence of John Adams the Sub-Warden:

Sept. 24, 1502. "Pro celatura librariae."

April 6, 1503. "Ad picturam nodorum in celatura nova bibliothecae."

Sept. 18, 1503. "Mag. Johannes Adams computavit pro expensis factis circa celaturam eiusdem bibliothecae cuius summa extendit se ad xxvii$^{li}$ vi$^{s}$."

That this is the present ceiling is proved by the ornamentation of the "knots," where frequently appear the Tudor rose, the dolphin of Fitzjames (Warden 1483–1507), and especially the royal arms of England, in use from Henry IV. to Elizabeth but superseded under James I.

In 1606 much work on the library stairs was in progress, the precise character of which cannot be determined.

(2) In 1623 the south room was well nigh entirely re-modelled, and hence was called the "New Library":

(*a*) The room at the east end was now thrown into the Library, and probably at the same time the new great east window of ten lights constructed.

(*b*) The old book cases were sold, and $20\frac{1}{2}$ new ones bought at 45*s.* each. The present half-case numbered 45 alone survives to serve as a model of the original cases, and also to explain the number, $20\frac{1}{2}$, of new cases bought.

(*c*) The two great dormer windows * facing to the north were in this year constructed, at a cost of slightly over £20. Of the windows of one light beneath, seven were filled with new glass, and three renewed, costing over £6. The iron bars for all, and other work, cost over £13 besides.

(*d*) The tiles of the gangway, some 2000 in number, were laid down at a cost of about £7.

(*e*) The vestibule and east end were panelled with oak throughout.

(*f*) The decorative plaster work at the east end, with the insignia of the founder, of Brent, then in 1623 Warden, and of Abbot, then in 1623 Archbishop, was added at a cost of about £32.

These prices are mainly exclusive of labour. The work was still in progress in 1624–25.†

The chief entries which prove these facts are:

(a) *Reg.*: *March* 3, 1623: "Ad maiorem librariae ornatum . . . consensum est de eadem augmentanda addendo quamdam iam vacuam cameram in orientali librariae parte sitam."

*Comput. Higgs, March–Aug.* 1623: "Blackham et Hawkins cubiculum iuxta bibliothecam demolientibus vi$^{s}$ vii$^{d}$."

(b) *Comput. Higgs:* "Benet junctori pro viginti pluteis et dimidio juxta xlv$^{s}$ pro singulis (supra iii$^{li}$ vii$^{s}$ vi$^{d}$ pro veteribus pluteis nostris deducendis) xlii$^{li}$ xv$^{s}$."

(c) *Comput. Higgs:* "Bull et Cox operam et omnimodam materiam ad duas magnas novae bibliothecae fenestras versus Boream extruendas ministrantibus, pro quadrigenta quinquaginta novem pedibus et dimidio cristarum, tabularum, et ly Corniss, et ly Ashlar, iuxta viii$^{d}$ pro singulis inter se invicem (supra septem libras illis termino novissimo in antecessum concreditas) per billam viii$^{li}$ vi$^{s}$ iiii$^{d}$, et pro viginti quatuor luminaribus iuxta iiii$^{s}$ pro singulis per billam iiii$^{li}$ xvi$^{s}$."

* *Cf.* one of the two dormer windows in the West Room in Plate IX.

† *Cf.* Comp. Gall. Nov. 1624—March 1625, which shows that there was still scaffolding round the Library at this time.

Iisdem minora luminaria septem de novo extruentibus iuxta xiii$^{s}$ iiii$^{d}$ pro singulis, et tria renovantibus iuxta ix$^{s}$ pro singulis, vi$^{li}$ iiii$^{d}$.

Day, fabro ferrario, pro ferreis vectibus tam rectis tam transversis circa novas fenestras bibliothecae et pro subscudibus et aliis ferramentis xiii$^{li}$ v$^{s}$ xi$^{d}$."

(d) *Comput. Fisher, Aug.–Nov.* 1623: "Newman pro duobus millibus et trecentis laterculorum ad sternendam bibliothecam iuxta viii$^{d}$ pro singulis duodenis vi$^{li}$ vi$^{s}$ vi$^{d}$. Eidem pro dimidio plaustris calcis ix$^{s}$.

[4 tiles = $\frac{9}{16}$ of a square foot. No. of square feet in gangway of South Room = $56\frac{1}{2} \times 5$. No. of tiles in same = therefore 2009]."

(e) *Comput. Higgs:* "Holt . . . pro 827 pedibus tabularum quernarum iiii$^{li}$ ii$^{s}$ viii$^{d}$."

(f) *Comput. Higgs:* "Benet . . . pro opero intestino circa supernam fornicem et laquearia novae bibliothecae per bill. xvi$^{li}$."

*Comput. Fisher:* "Benet, pro opero intestino in bibliotheca per billam xv$^{li}$ ix$^{s}$."

*Ib.*: "Pictori pinginti et deauranti insignia in bibliotheca xvi$^{s}$."

That "Opus intestinum" means the plaster work seems proved by this description of its position. This throws great light on the 1641 entries, where it must be contrasted with the "Tabulatum," *i.e.*, oak panelling.

(3) In 1641 two additions at least were made to the north end of the west room. The carved oak panels were added, and the plaster work above. In imitation of the plaster work at the east end, the arms of Warden Savile, and of the Archbishop most prominent during his term of office, viz., Whitgift (1583–1604), were set flanking the Founder's arms.

Proof of this:

*Reg. Oct.* 20, 1641: "Decernitur ut superior pars bibliothecae intestino ornaretur."

*Comput. Button, Aug.–Nov.* 1641: "Booth . . . pro opero vario in bibliotheca et alibi in Coll. per bill. 36$^{li}$ 10$^{s}$ 4$^{d}$."

*Ib.*: "Fabro lignario interius tabulatum in libraria reparanti et novum addenti, per bill. 18$^{li}$ 4$^{s}$."

That the "superior pars" means the "top end" of the old library, *i.e.*, the West Room, may be argued from an entry in the Reg. for Jan. 21, 1504: "Per mediam partem eiusdem bibliothecae quae protendit in longitudinem ab oriente in occidentem ad summam."

Two additions remain, to which I find it impossible to assign so certain a date.

(1) The cornices and pediments of the book-cases, the two screens, and the balustrades of the stairs, all these are clearly of the same date and of Jacobean work. The lattice-work of the cases now numbered 27–33, 65–67, and 73–75, are also not later than the cornices. As none of these is definitely named in the accounts, the choice lies between 1623 and 1641. The former seems to me the more probable, as it is the great year of restoration.

(2) Of the two dormer windows in the west room I can find no precise record in any archive. From November 1597 to August 1598 much work was going on in the Library, as again there was much scaffolding work in 1641, which scarcely seems necessary for the work else assigned that year. I incline to choose the former date, but it is strange that the entries are so scanty.

Entries of 1597–8:

*Comput. Trafford, Nov.* 1597—*March*, 1598: Benson pro saxo ad extruendas fenestras in bibliotheca xix$^{s}$ ii$^{d}$.

*Comput. Fisher: March—Aug.* 1598: Thwayte vitriario vi$^{li}$ vi$^{s}$ iiii$^{d}$.

*Ib.*: pro ly plankes ad fenestram librariae, 11$^{s}$.

Also many payments to workmen.

The Comput. for Aug.—Nov. is obliterated by the fading of the ink.

Entries of 1641:

*Comput. Button:* Boxley scandulario pro tegulis, calce, moscho, et opere per bill. 9$^{li}$ 8$^{s}$ 8$^{d}$.

*Ib.*: Maud cementario . . . pro vario opere in bibliotheca et alibi in Coll. per bill. 4$^{li}$ 4$^{s}$.

*Ib.*: Vitriario pro opere in bibliotheca et hospitio 1$^{li}$ 19$^{s}$ 3$^{d}$.

Willis and Clark (p. 553) give 1589 as the general date for all the dormer windows. I can find no solitary piece of evidence to confirm this. We know that the two in the south room were built in 1623. In

style and appearance those in the west room are precisely similar. But which were copied? For myself I think it was the former pair.

It is thus clear that by the middle of the seventeenth century the Library attained the form it now presents, the great dates in its history being those of the years 1377–78, 1502–3, 1623–24, and 1641.

Since this last date nothing of like importance has happened, save the insertion in the East window of the present glass. In 1841 the then Librarian, E. T. Bigge, Fellow, 1833, sometime Archdeacon of Lindisfarne,* presented to the Library twelve cartoons of old glass of date 1598, which he had picked up in Holland in the preceding year. Each cartoon consists of one scene of our Lord's Passion, beginning in the left-hand bottom corner with the "Washing of the Disciples' Feet," and ending with the "Deposition from the Cross" in the top right-hand corner. Each cartoon is flanked by two figures, a Virtue on one side and a Vice on the other. The drawing, the colouring, the expression, and the minute accuracy of detail, all combine to make this certainly one of the most beautiful small windows in Oxford. The side panes were at the same time filled with modern English glass. The windows were set in the original stonework, which was at the same time repaired.

Of other windows in the Library, the Quarries in the east windows of the west room may easily, from their style, date back to Bishop Rede.† The great south window with four lights in the vestibule was filled with stained glass as the result of a subscription, initiated by

* Whence, too, the name "Archdeacon" given the Merton strong ale.

† *Cf.* Winston, Glass Painting, ii, Plates 55, 56.

Bishop Hobhouse in 1858 to commemorate the benefactors of the Library and the confratres,

"Multi praeterea quos fama obscura recondit."

Of the three little stained-glass windows on the south side of the south room, one was put up by his friends in memory of William Adams, the allegorist, who died in 1848; and the other two, commemorating Wyllyot and Bradwardine, about the same time. The south window at the east end was the gift of Montagu Osborn (Fellow 1847, and Librarian 1849–51), and was set up in 1855 to commemorate Rede and Savile, as the two side inscriptions record.

For the rest, new shelves were added below the reading desks in 1792, and the east end and vestibule were similarly enriched in 1884 and 1887. The roof was restored in 1870–71 under care of G. G. Scott. The heating apparatus replaced the old brazier of 1824 during the same repairs. But to take a light into the Library is to commit a crime against the history of five centuries.

### Books.

All books in Merton Library originally, and for long years, were chained to the book-cases. All the present cases, without exception, still retain the marks of the fittings for the chains and the holes for the rods. In each case were two rows of books. On the top shelf stood the octavos and smaller books, and just below this shelf on either side of the case ran rods lengthwise from wall to gangway. Each book had a chain clamped to one cover. In the middle of the chain was a swivel, and it was fastened to a ring on the rod below. This was also the arrangement for the folios on the

bottom shelf, save that here there was but one rod running through the centre of the case below the readers' desks, and thus serving for the chains on both sides, which passed through the slits between desks and case. Thus, to each complete case were three rows of rods, but all books were chained from below, not, as wrongly in two examples of chained books still preserved as curiosities,* from above. The books, as usual, stood in the cases with their outer edges, and not their backs, towards the reader. Each rod-hole on the gangway was closed with an iron cover which locked. The sole way of removing a book, therefore, was to unlock the cover, draw the rod out, and so detach from it the ring of the chain fastened to any book required. A good example of the method of fastening is still preserved to-day in the half-case 45, which, save for the wrong chaining and the lattice door, well represents the appearance of every case in the Library in the late fourteenth century. The Libraries of All Saints' Church, Hereford, and Wimborne Minster, and the small Chapter Library at Hereford, are the only three Libraries in England besides Merton still preserving examples of chained books; and the first two, at least, are much later in date than the Merton Library. Only in 1792 were the chains finally removed, this being the latest known case of the retention of the chains at either Oxford or Cambridge.

From the first, books could be borrowed. For this purpose, at intervals, an "Electio Librorum" was held under supervision either of the Warden or of the Sub-Warden, and in presence of several of the senior Fellows.

* These books are a Treatise on Jurisprudence (date uncertain), and Desgodetz' Les Edifices Antiques de Rome, Paris, 1682.

On a strip of parchment was then entered, on the left, the borrower's name, on the right that of the book or books he borrowed. Several such strips of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are still preserved.* At each electio books borrowed at the last had to be returned, nor could any book be borrowed save some pledge of sufficient value were deposited, either of money or of books of the borrower's own. There are very many instances, *e.g.*,

1498.—"The Warden borrowed a book from the Library and left another as pledge. This was judged of too small value, and he therefore added as well S. Jerome upon Isaiah."

1512.—"A Map of England in the Library lent to the Dean of Wells, he depositing 40*s.* security. When it came back five months later it was much damaged. Yet the Dean had received his 40*s.* back. The loss must be made good.†

Thus, in 1500, as many as 349 books were distributed. For failing to return books, offenders were gated, fined, or lost their commons. At times energetic measures had to be taken:

Sept. 1561.—"All the bachileurs chambers shall be serchyd forthwith for the rare bookes stollond out of the Librarie . . which was done out of hande . . . one was lefte in the librare by what means we know not."

Not only members of the College, but also those of other colleges, and even strangers, were at times allowed to borrow books. The Merton copy of William of Malmesbury was from February to October 1566 in possession of Archbishop Parker. Pope Innocent VIII.'s Chamberlain borrowed a Merton Martial in July 1490; the Abbot of Abingdon volumes of S. Jerome and S. Augustine in 1489; and the Archbishop of Armagh a Bede MS. in 1626. Many books were even lent to the University in 1566.

* Mert. MS. 4251, 4251b, 4252. † Reg. i. fol. 219b fin.

Books were acquired by gift or purchase. The duty of Fellows to bequeath books was insisted on in 1276, and no less than twenty-three names of donors are preserved for the fourteenth century alone. A mere fragment of a catalogue of about 1325 contains the names of thirty-nine philosophical and thirteen mathematical books.* Yet Theology formed more than half the entire Library. Bishop Rede left 99 volumes to the Library, as he gave books to New College and Exeter, and another hundred were to come to it on the death of his kinsman Richard Pestour. In Wood's time Rede's picture hung in the Library in memory of his bounty, but it is now lost.†

Other considerable benefactors were Warden Gygur (1486), William Martial (1574–83), William Leach (1589), Sir Henry Savile (1620), Thomas Allen (1640), Griffin Higgs (1659), Peter Nicholls (1678), and Henry Kent (commoner 1737, who bequeathed as many as 883 books). There are now 347 MSS. in the College Library. Chief of the 57 donors of these were Rede, who gave 34; Wardens Fitzjames (18), Sever (17), Bloxham (11), Durant (3); Robert Huntingdon (14 Oriental: he was librarian in 1674); John Raynham (Fellow Ed. II., 13); William Duffield (Fellow Ric. II., 6); and Hamund Haydok (Fellow 1417, 5).

The losses under the Edwardine Visitors were severe. Thus of Rede's 99 books only 34 are now preserved.‡ Hence under Elizabeth great activity was displayed in the purchase of books, and Fellows travelling abroad

* Mert. MS. 4250; *cf.* Oxoniana, ii. p. 36.

† Wood, MS. Ballard, 46.

‡ So Twyne saw a copy of the Organon belonging to Merton Library in a bookseller's shop in London (MSS. xxii. 118).

were entrusted with large powers to buy for the Library. Thus Thomas Savile sent home many books from Italy in 1589, and from Frankfurt fair in 1591, the latter comprising a Talmud, Zabarella, and other Aristotelian commentaries. The like commission was given to Henry Cuffe when he went travelling on the Continent in 1597. The money for such purposes has been for centuries derived from admission and degree fees, and is supplemented in the present century by a fixed annual grant from the College. Within the last six years two library rules, well-nigh as old as the building itself, have been rescinded, viz., in 1893, that requiring a subscription to the Library from a newly elected Fellow, and, in May 1897, that requiring a deposit for books taken out of Oxford.

Undergraduates were first admitted to the Library in 1827; but it was for half a century open to them only one hour a week. It is now open for three hours every morning, save Sunday.

Of other events, an inter-collegiate scheme for specialisation in 1868–70 pledged the College to spend £20 on modern history. Though the scheme is long since a failure, the College at least satisfies this requirement. The MSS. were removed to the sacristy in 1886, and thus more room was obtained. The need for this is still great, inasmuch as the Library possesses to-day over 18,000 volumes, and has recently grown at the rate of an additional 350 or more volumes annually.

Catalogues of the books, more or less fragmentary, have always been made. In 1843, the plan of interleaving and marking the printed Bodleian Catalogue was adopted, and the volumes of this rest still on a table in the vestibule. In 1845 Coxe was paid for his catalogue of MSS. But after lesser efforts, the first great

printed catalogue of the printed books in Merton Library was published in 1879, the result of six years most careful work on the part of the late librarian William Wallace. Supplements have since been published in 1883, 1890, 1899.

The office of Librarian itself is over two centuries old. Originally the Sub-Warden exercised a general control, till an external librarian was hired in 1658. But in 1672, Dr. Higgs left money to permanently endow the office, which was to be held by a Fellow of at least four years' standing. His duties were carefully defined, and it is interesting that to the need of ever watchful care, "perdius et pernox," over the books, is added the duty of acting as antiquary and historian of the College.

"Praecipue vero illi curae sit tum archiva domestica tum acta, si res feret publica, summa qua poterit industria perscrutari et quicquid de pientissimo fundatore nostro Gualtero de Merton, vel de Scoto, Ochamo, Bradwardino, Suisseto, Bodleio, Savilio, aliisque vel longe retro acti vel sequioris aevi custodibus sociisve scitu dignum compererit, in adversaria sua seponere, et D^ni. Custodis ac quinque seniorum judicio prius comprobatum, inter bibliothecae manuscripta recondere, ut postea vel ipse vel e succedentibus bibliothecariis quispiam hac historiam ornandi supellectili instructus, eorum vitas justo gratoque volumine conscriptas publici juris faciat seraeque tradat posteritati."

In the eighteenth century the Library is described as "an old ruinous place that lies in neglect," and a Merton librarian could be found to spend the library money on the junior Fellows "to keep up his faction," and hurl works of logic out into the quadrangle to spite the Warden. In the nineteenth a very late successor cannot but note how his more recent predecessors have most carefully and thoroughly observed both duties of the office as enunciated in 1672. The College archives and the College history, for instance, owe not a little to its librarians

Edward Denison (1828–31), Edmund Hobhouse (1842–49), and Stephen Edwardes (1867). In January 1686, Anthony Wood was employed in "setting the books to rights."* In June 1897, a library Committee was instituted. In the Library to-day are kept two great globes, one terrestrial, one celestial (secured in exchange for the organ in the chapel in 1577), and a case of astrological instruments. One of these was bought in 1557; another astrolabe was left to the College in 1598 by John Woodward, Fellow in 1547. And pious tradition has always seen in the oldest astrolabe preserved that which Chaucer studied, when he wrote to his son Lewis:

"Ther-for have I geven thee a suffisaunt Astrolabie as for oure orizonte, compowned after the latitude of Oxenford."

But still more certain and precious a relic of the poet is preserved to-day among the MSS. in the Sacristy in the shape of a very beautiful copy of the first Caxton edition of Chaucer. And this may be best illustrated from an entry in the Register for May 1815:

"Thanks voted Lord Spencer for his great kindness in permitting the College to take from his mutilated duplicate of Caxton's first edition of Chaucer any leaves that might supply the deficiencies in the copy belonging to the College Library: which upon collation did supply them with one leaf out of the three that are wanting.

"Agreed also on recommendation of Lord Spencer to put the College copy into the hands of Mr. Charles Lewis of London in order that it may be bound."

The other two leaves were purchased in 1820 for £21.

[*Note*:—The facts concerning the Library windows on pp. 235–6 I owe mainly to Bishop Hobhouse, who has most kindly placed his notes thereon at my disposal. To Messrs. T. Bowman and W. W. How, Fellows of the College, I am indebted for some useful suggestions as to the due application of the often very confusing facts I have gleaned from the College accounts. And, as always, the Warden's kindness in obtaining for me outside information has been never failing.]

* Life and Times, iii. 178.

# CHAPTER IV

## HALL, QUADRANGLES, AND GARDEN

The College Hall has always, it seems, stood in its present position on the south side of the front quadrangle. The original "refectory" was built about the same time as the choir, at the end of the thirteenth century. Thus we hear in 1304 of the "steps of the hall." Though numerous repairs were effected from time to time, the building seems to have remained essentially unaltered for centuries. In 1512 it was newly floored and decorated; the wainscoting, which exhibited the arms of Henry VIII., was added in 1540; and the entrance porch was built in 1579. This last is an unusual feature of a collegiate hall. Only Oriel, Queen's and New College in Oxford, and Trinity in Cambridge, also display this. By 1646 the Hall had become "situ et ruinis squalida," but was again repaired and remained through the seventeenth century the customary place for College meetings. A century later, in 1749, fresh glass and stucco work were added. But down to the end of this century we must picture the hall as it is exhibited, alike in Agas' Map of 1578, in Loggan's Plan of 1675,* and the Oxford Almanack of 1788—viz., as a large plain, indeed ugly, building, without battlements, with

* *Cf.* Frontispiece.

two louvres in the roof, three windows on either side, approached by a porch two stories high, and the steps flanked by a railing.

In 1790–94 it was almost entirely re-modelled, so that "little more than the dimensions of the original structure" remained. The old painted glass, however, the portals on north and south, and the oaken door on the north, with the great original hinge of iron tracery, were retained. The old custom of lighting the hall by candles, "not exceeding eighty in number," was preserved till 1858, when gas was introduced. The picturesque soft colouring, the result of the old custom, can be seen to-day in Oxford Halls at Lincoln, and at All Souls, but not, unhappily, at Merton.

The second restoration, considered in 1865, was begun in 1872. When the Hall, in 1874, passed a finished work from Sir Gilbert Scott's hands, it displayed in some respects an adaptation of the original design (as seen, *e.g.*, in the stone window seats), but it was in the main a newly modelled building with a new and very handsome oak roof. This is the present hall save for a few later additions. Thus in 1876 a general Merton subscription to honour the then Warden Marsham's fiftieth year of government placed in the windows the memorial glass, which contains in each pane the arms of a notable Mertonian, and adds very greatly to the beauty of the interior. The last of these windows—viz., the first on the lefthand of the entrance, was added in 1891. And in 1885–6, by gift of the present Warden, the walls were painted, and the present little shields of arms hung round about. Also below the roof were inscribed four mottoes, two on the north, and two on the south side. The two former are classical, reading

(1) "Omnes Artes quae ad humanitatem pertinent habent quoddam commune vinculum et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur."

(2) "Otium sine literis mors est et hominis vivi sepultura."

The writings on the wall of the south side are taken from the Founder's statutes:

(1) "Scholares mensam communem habebunt et habitum conformem."

(2) "Scholares in omnibus et super omnia unitatem et mutuam inter se caritatem, pacem, et concordiam, semper observent."

During the recent restorations the door which once led from the upper end of the hall into the room over the Fitzjames archway was blocked up. Over the vestibule at the lower end is a broad "minstrels' gallery," devoted at times, in Commemoration week, to this, its proper, use. Indeed, the mourning into which the thought of nineteenth-century architecture must plunge Merton College is justly lightened by a remembrance of its present Hall.*

### Portraits in the Hall.

Twelve portraits to-day adorn the walls of the Hall. Over the high table are these:

*End Wall:* (above) The Founder, given in 1796 by Scrope Berdmore, Warden.

(below) William Harvey, Warden, given by George Hammond, Fellow 1818–1882.

(To right) Duns Scotus, a copy of the Bodleian portrait.

(To left) Sir Thomas Bodley, given in 1865 by Stephen Edwardes, postmaster, fellow, and bursar.

* *Cf.* throughout Reg. and also Gutch, "History," 17. Ingram *ad loc.* Pointer, 16, 17; Willis and Clark, iii. 251, 366; Oxf. Arch. Soc. N. S. iii. 269; "Mert. Arch." ii. 17, fol. 41; Wood, "Life," ii. 244.

*North Wall:* Hon. G. C. Brodrick, present Warden.
Edward Denison, Fellow 1826, Bishop of Salisbury.
Sir E. W. Head, Fellow 1830–39, Governor-Genera of Canada 1854–61.
Sir G. H. Seymour, Fellow 1821, given by himself.
*South Wall:* Robert Bullock Marsham, Warden.
Sir Henry Savile, Warden, given in 1868 by William Esson, Fellow 1860–97, and present bursar.
Shute Barrington, Fellow 1755, Bishop of Durham.
Sir Giles Rooke, Fellow 1765, Justice of Common Pleas 1793–1808.

Of these, the portraits of Marsham, Denison, and Head, were presented by old Mertonians to the College to commemorate the Sexcentary festival of 1864.

The portrait of the present Warden, painted by R. W. Macbeth, A.R.A., the result of a general Merton subscription in 1898, was placed in the hall in January 1899.

One curious allegorical picture, which hung in the Hall at the end of last century, no longer finds a place there. It is thus described: *

"At the upper end of the hall is a large historical painting, containing an allegorical representation of the Founder sitting in his episcopal robes and mitre, and pointing to a view of his College. On the right is Minerva introducing a youth holding a book with his finger placed on the word ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ inscribed thereon. To the left, attendant on the founder, stand Religion and Prudence; behind which are two monks retiring with countenances expressive of the utmost malignancy and indignation. In the upper part of the piece appear hovering two small angelical figures, bearing a laurel wreath and a scroll containing the names of some eminent members of this Society."

This was designed in 1765 and given the College by John Wall, painter and physician, Fellow in 1735, "in publicum animi grati testimonium." The Oxford almanacks of the time testify to the fondness of Oxford for the cherubic-allegorical illustration of history. As the taste has declined, the picture has disappeared.

* Gutch, App. p. 218; *cf.* Chalmers, i. 12.

### College Dinners.

The rules for the conduct and fare of the scholars of Merton at meal-times in the College hall were from the first of a strict monastic character. The common meals were of the founder's institution, and Archbishop Peckham, in 1284, issued ordinances for the behaviour thereat:

"In future ye are to have a reader at meals whom we enjoin to read before you the Moralia of Gregory or some other edifying work easy of comprehension; and we desire that ye keep silence while the reading is going on, lest the unbridled licence of a garrulous tongue give evidence of an ill-ordered mind, as a depraved daughter follows the steps of an infamous mother. We give leave, however, to speak at all times both at meals and elsewhere when there is necessity, but always briefly and modestly."*

The century before the Reformation was one of stringent rule in these respects. No Master, Bachelor, or Fellow, might ever dine elsewhere save in the College Hall, unless special dispensation were granted. To go outside the College gates, or to dine in the city, was punished by a heavy fine and reprimand. During meal-time, all conversation must needs be in Latin, and a chaplain had to read aloud the Bible and say grace, when bidden by the Sub-Warden. The Bursar was empowered to fine, "according to his conscience," any who exceeded the common allowance of food and drink. Only the Warden and Bursar might have cooking done for them in the kitchen out of regular hours. Any Master who, pitifully regarding the sorry fare of the Postmasters, smuggled bread and meat out of hall to give to them was fined 1*d.* for his charity each time. No Master might come into Hall "after the cheese had

* Trans. Willis and Clark, iii. 365.

been put on the table," lack of punctuality being sternly visited upon the offender. Fixed places in Hall, as in Chapel, were assigned by the Warden. The Junior Masters might "detest sitting with the Bachelors," but unless they obeyed they lost their commons. Sumptuary legislation was minute, fixing the amount to be spent on each meal of every Fellow, Scholar, and Servant, every day of the week. There was one code of prices for Lent, and another out of Lent, much more money being expended on the Fellows' food (curiously enough) in the former case, though to the Postmasters it made no difference. Thus in 1404 a Fellow's meals for the week cost the College 1*s.* 6*d.** In 1546 this had risen to 2*s.* 11½*d.* (out of Lent) and 4*s.* 8*d.* (in Lent), while each Postmaster's meals cost 3*s.* 9*d.* In 1586 a new scale of allowances fixed 3*s.* 5*d.* (or 4*s.* 3*d.* if a quarter of wheat cost over 20*s.*) as the week's expenditure on a Fellow's meals out of Lent, and 4*s.* 11*d.* in Lent. On Thursdays and Sundays the community fared the best, but on Fridays and Saturdays in Lent it went supperless to bed. An invidious distinction was drawn in 1504. In that year Jurists and Theologians were allowed supper on these days, but the Philosophers had to go hungry. Nature proved too strong for this really wanton test of the philosophic temperament, and the distinction speedily vanished.

After the Reformation these rules were still, partly at least, maintained. A growing tendency to curtail or dispense altogether with the reading at meals was severely checked in 1592, when the Sub-Warden was newly charged to see to it, that a complete chapter of the New Testament should be read during both dinner

* "Mert. Arch." ii. i. fol. 64.

and supper, and the saying of grace was carefully enforced. Archbishop Laud maintained, in 1638, the old discipline in this and other respects. The Warden's, Chaplains', and Fellows' tables were to be kept carefully distinct, and the Gospels read to them at dinner in Latin by a Postmaster. Nor might any enjoy "double beer or ale." At the end of this century, in 1690, we hear first of the Postmasters' table, these having perhaps for some time dined in Hall only after the Fellows had finished. The hour of dinner was fixed ever later and later. In 1672, 11 A.M.,* soon after it was moved to mid-day; thence to 1 P.M. in 1725, but quickly back to mid-day again "because it interfered with church time on Sundays, and the time of exercise in the schools on other days." † One o'clock, indeed, was at this time the usual hour for lectures. In 1795 dinner hour was altered to 4 P.M.; thence to 5 P.M. (1812); 6 P.M. (1858); and finally 7 P.M. (1871). From 1795–1858 there were afternoon prayers for half an hour before dinner. The reading at dinner was still the practice a century and a half ago, as in 1749 it was the custom to listen at first to a Bible Clerk, who read some portion of the Greek New Testament, whence it was supposed the Fellows would hit upon some theme, and discuss it among themselves for the remainder of the meal.‡

By this time too, the Commoners' table was distinguished from the Postmasters'. To-day there are five tables in Hall—viz., the High table (for the Warden and Fellows), the Postmasters' (for all Postmasters and Exhibitioners), and three others. To each Undergraduate table one member is appointed as steward. Forty years ago the Postmasters elected

* Wood, "Life," ii. 249. † Oxoniana, iv. 239. ‡ Pointer, p. 20.

their own steward. With him rests the decision for "sconcing," though appeal against him always, till very recent years, could be made to the head of the High table. Appeals are now decided out of Hall, which is a much more prosaic method.

If called for by a member of the High table present in Hall before 7·5 P.M., this grace is read by a Postmaster from a stand on the dais:

"Oculi omnium in te respiciunt, Domine, Tu das escam illis tempore opportuno, Aperis manum tuam, et imples omne animal benedictione tua. Benedicas nobis, Deus, omnibus donis quae de tua Beneficentia accepturi simus, per Jesum Christum Dominum Nostrum."

The longer "Gratiae post mensam" is now not read.* The old kitchen was built in 1278, as the accounts of that year exist to show.†

### The Front Quadrangle.

The south side of this is formed by the Hall, the west by the east end of the chapel, the east and south-east corner by the Warden's house, the north by a range of rooms, and at the north-west corner stands the entrance tower and gateway, with a building on its western side.

The present entrance tower and gateway were built and embattled by Warden Thomas Rodeborne in 1418,‡ but their appearance has considerably changed since. As the northern face appears in Loggan's view there is on the first floor a central window of two lights with square hood-mould. On either side is a beautiful tabernacle, containing the statue of King Henry III. on

* For all facts, where no authority is stated, save for to-day's customs, the Register is sole authority.

† *Cf. Arch. Journ.* ii. 1846, pp. 142–3. ‡ Cal. Rec. 178.

the left and the Founder on the right. *Above* this is an ornamental and curious antique sculpture, with elaborate cresting. Above this again is a smaller window of two lights with square hood-mould under the crenellated parapet.* A century later, in 1772, only the upper window has been changed in form.† But during general restorations to the north front of the College in 1836–38 the antique sculpture was removed to a place immediately over the entrance, *i.e.*, *below* the first window, the square upper window was replaced by one in imitation of the one below, and the space between the two windows was further decorated.‡ Soon after, two ornamental chimneys were added. So it put on its present appearance. Statues, canopies, and antique sculpture remain. The latter is thus described:

"The curious piece of carv'd stone work over the College gate being a representation of S. John Baptist, is a relick of the Church built upon or near the same ground where Merton Chapel now stands. In which you find the Baptist in habit of a monk;§ and our Saviour himself coming after him with the Dove over his head, in the shape of which the Holy Ghost descended on Him at his Baptism. There is likewise the Agnus Dei and Sun of Righteousness, with the New Testament in his hand, bringing a new revelation to the world. Also the Serpent, condemn'd to creep on the ground, whose Head 'twas prophesyd our Saviour should break. Likewise, the Unicorn, whose horn was an emblem of our Saviour's exaltation. You may observe likewise the Palm Trees, with branches broken off to strow on the ground in his Procession to Jerusalem. And over all the Pelican feeding her young ones with her own Blood, an emblem of our Saviour's dying for mankind."‖

Other beasts here not described are sculptured in the left half, resembling a lion, a lamb (?), and a hound. The hound is apparently chasing the many coneys

* See Frontispiece; *cf.* Willis and Clark, iii. 287.

† Oxf. Almanack in Skelton, Plate 72.

‡ Thus the change appears first in a view of 1845.

§ Much more like a king. ‖ Pointer, 15, 16.

sculptured at the bottom. During "Oliver's raigne," this sculpture had been much defaced, and was therefore, in September 1682, "repaired and new oyled over in white colours," as well as the two statues which had also suffered.* In 1897 the workmen employed in preparing the illuminations, whereby the College celebrated the sixtieth year of the Queen's reign, knocked the head off the hound, but it has been deftly replaced.

The front of the College, from the entrance tower to the Warden's house, was rebuilt entirely in 1588–91. The building on the west side of the entrance gate was finished in 1631. Adjoining the new front on the east were then existing some old low buildings, like a refectory, which then it seems were part of the Warden's house. These and the new front of 1588 may be seen in Loggan's view.† But in 1812 these old buildings were pulled down, and the present battlemented building was erected on their site. This forms the entrance from the street into the Warden's house, but had then no external decorative canopy on the first floor.‡ Then in 1817 the order was made to remodel the whole north front of the College and make it, so far as possible, uniform. But this was not finally effected till the last reconstruction of 1836–38. It was in these years, it seems, that the canopy and entrance into the Warden's house from the street were made, the bow window further to the west was added, and the battlements on both sides were continued to make one uniform front from S. Alban Hall to the gateway and tower.§

* Wood, Life, iii. 27; *cf.* too, Wood, ap. Gutch. App. 221.

† *Cf.* Frontispiece.

‡ *Cf.* Plate published June 1, 1813, to illustrate R. Ackermann's "History of Oxford."

§ This appears from views of 1845 and 1851.

The dial on the eastern outer wall of the chapel "with only a little bullet for its gnomon" is ascribed both to Henry Briggs * and to John Bainbridge,† first Savilian Professors of Geometry and Astronomy respectively. And the wealth of creepers of many colours, which on a sunny October day make of the north and east sides of this quadrangle one of the most beautiful of Oxford's many tributes to autumn, were all planted in recent years by Mr. Bowman as Garden-Master.

### The Warden's House.‡

In 1442 occurs a mention of windows in the "placea Custodis.§" But the present House in the front quadrangle is mainly the work of two Wardens. In Sever's day (1455–71) it comprised refectory, kitchen, bedrooms, and private chapel. These all stood on the east side of the front quadrangle, and north of the present entrance from the quadrangle, and part, at least, if not the whole, was built by him. The south-east turreted corner, including the present entrance-hall, dining-room, drawing-room, above it, "Queen's Chamber" over the archway leading into the Fellows' quadrangle, and the archway itself, were all the work of Warden Fitzjames, and built between 1483–1507.‖ In the groined vaulting of the great archway there are carved, where the ribs intersect, the twelve signs of the zodiac, and in the centre the royal arms of Henry VII. Over it, on the north side, are the arms of the see of Rochester and Fitzjames. ‖

Since the building of the Fellows' quadrangle the

* Aubrey, "Brief Lives," i. 123. † Pointer, p. 17.

‡ *Cf.* Reg. 1509, 1525, 1622; Wood. "Athenae," ii. 721; Willis and Clark, iii. 342, 343. § "Mert. Arch." ii. 17, pp. 31, 32.

‖ *Cf.* Ingram, *ad loc.* Gutch. App. p. 219; Vid. Plate III.

Warden's House has, by successive stages, in 1626, 1665, 1790, and 1813–14, encroached upon its eastern side, until now it occupies also half of this.* The top floor here was a long gallery till 1828, when it was converted into rooms. The door into the garden was made in 1763. The whole House has been much changed by remodelling in 1836–38, when the entrance into the street and its present long gallery were constructed.

## S. Alban Hall.

S. Alban Hall Quadrangle, popularly to-day called "Stubbins," and yesterday the "Farmyard," was also built, tradition says, by Warden Fitzjames,† though it was not till 1549 that it finally became property of the College.‡ In 1599 the northern front on the street was entirely rebuilt of free-stone with a legacy of £250 bequeathed by Benedict Barnam, Alderman of London,§ whose arms are engraven over the gate into the street. The Hall was incorporated with Merton College in 1881, and the archway of communication with the front quadrangle was cut in 1883. Its Hall is now used as a lecture-room, its Chapel as a store-room, its plate is added to the College plate. Its most picturesque feature is undoubtedly the "Dove-cot," built before 1748, but how much earlier I cannot find. For practically there exist no records of S. Alban Hall.

In a sense, then, the College may claim as Mertonians those men of note who were members of S. Alban Hall. Such as were Speaker Lenthal in 1606, Admiral Robert

* Reg. *Cf.* Wood, "Life," i. 396, 397.
† Wood, "History," 654 *sqq.*; *cf.* Plate V.
‡ Cal. Rec. 251, 252.
§ Reg. 1599; Wood, MS. Bodl. 594, p. 141; "History," 654–659.

Blake in 1615; Thomas Lamplugh, Principal 1664, Archbishop of York 1688–1691; Nicholas Marsh, Principal 1673, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland 1702–13; John Henry Newman, Vice-Principal 1825; and William Walsh in 1856, Bishop of Dover from 1897.

## "Mob Quad."*

The most picturesque of the Merton, and perhaps the most charming of all the smaller Oxford, quadrangles is the inner court, always called to-day "Mob Quad." This name's origin cannot be traced. In old days this quadrangle was called the Bachelors', Little, or Old, Quadrangle, indifferently, and officially one of these names was always used, at least till 1826. The earliest record of the name "Mob" I can find, is in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1797,† which mentions a window "in the small quadrangle, vulgo Mob." To Anthony Wood the name seems unknown,‡ and to attempt to suggest an origin for it were too hazardous.

The south and most of the west side are formed by the Library above and rooms underneath. The Library, as has been seen, was built in 1377–78. There is but scanty evidence to fix the date of the north and east sides. A popular theory would make the east side the older, and the north side added later, in the sixteenth century.§ The sole argument for this is one of conjecture. The back of the north side is but ten feet removed from the buttresses on the south side of the

* *Cf.* Plate IX., showing the North and part of West side, with the Chapel Tower presiding over all.

† P. 377. ‡ Wood, "Life," i. 163, ii. 249.

§ Willis and Clark, iii. 250–251; *cf.* Oxf. Arch. Soc. Proc. N. S. ii. 272–277; Maxwell-Lyte, p. 153.

Choir, and the view of this from the quadrangle is, in consequence, entirely hidden. This, it is conjectured, cannot have been the original plan, for the artistic sense of the builders of the east side must have delighted to see the quadrangle closed, on the north side by the Choir, on the north-west by the South Transept. A later inartistic and utilitarian age blocked up the view by building the north and north-west sides of the quadrangle.

What is this purely conjectural argument worth? A careful study of the masonry (especially that at the back of the north side), of the doorways and windows, serves, I think, to show such an antiquity of the north side, and such a similarity between the two sides, that to ascribe a later date to the north than to the east is to me impossible. Nor can I think the "artistic-sense" argument of any value whatever.

The date suggested for these two sides is that of the sacristy—viz., 1311. It has been seen that about 1300 there was large expenditure upon "novae camerae."* And in 1314–15 we hear of these in a roll where occurs an entry "ad fodiendum pro fundamento novi operis."† And, finally, so far as we can rely upon the evidence supplied by the buildings themselves, we are compelled to believe that the east side is of the same date as the Treasury, for the masonry of these is unmistakeably continuous, and that the north side most certainly is *not* later than the east. The rougher finish and absence of ornament of the south side of the Chapel choir suggest at once that it was intended to build a range of rooms in front of it, unless, indeed, these were already in building. In style the Treasury is clearly

* Mert. MS. 4063; *supra*, p. 198. † Mert. MS. 63.

"MOB QUAD"

(SHOWING ONE OF THE FOUR DORMER WINDOWS OF THE LIBRARY, AND, IN THE CORNER, ONE WINDOW OF THE "OXONIAM QUARE" ROOM)

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

of date about 1300. I conclude that the north and east sides of Mob Quadrangle and the Treasury are all of like date—*i.e.*, slightly later than the Chapel Choir.

The rooms in Mob Quadrangle have, from the first to the present day, been devoted almost entirely to the use of the junior members of the Society.

### The Camera Oxoniam Quare.

Several rooms in College enjoyed distinctive names. Thus in the front quadrangle existed the "Bay-Tree" room on the first floor of the staircase next the porter's lodge. All the garrets were called cock-lofts, and thus Anthony Wood, while a Postmaster, lived "in the cock-loft over the bay-tree chamber" in 1648.* Where, however, were situated the rooms known in 1729–30 as "The Barn," "The Vault," and "The Coach and Horses," I cannot tell. But most famous of such rooms was that in Mob Quad., on the central staircase of the north side—viz., the room on the first floor and to the left hand as you ascend the staircase. This for over three centuries has been known as the "Oxoniam Quare" room. For in the reign of Henry VIII. two little panes of stained glass were inserted, one in each centre window. These, put together, read as follows:

> "Oxoniam quare venisti premeditare,
> Nocte dieque cave tempus consumere prave."

The pane of the second line has not been in existence for many years. But the other remained in these rooms till thrown out into the quadrangle and broken in 1891. It has been pieced again together, but not restored to

* Wood, "Life," i. 147. Many references to these names occur in the Register.

the room, for greater security's sake.* A fragment of an ancient fresco which once adorned this rooom is still preserved.

### The Treasury and Sacristy.

On the right of the main entrance-passage into Mob Quad. is the "Outer Sacristy." Thence a very old stone staircase leads up a turret into the Muniment Room or Treasury, which forms the entire first floor over the passage. From the outer Sacristy on the north opens out the inner Sacristy or Vestry, whence once a doorway opened into the east end of the Choir, into which still a small peep-hole affords a view. From the inner Sacristy a stone staircase leads up into the vestibule of the Hall, crossing the passage from the front quadrangle into what is known to-day as "Patey's Quad."

The Treasury is one of the oldest buildings in the College. It is built entirely of stone, as is the outer Sacristy, being thus fireproof. Tradition ascribes it a date before the founding of the College, and would see in it the Counting House of Jacob the Jew. But its windows resemble those of Carnarvon Castle, which with the stonework suggests convincingly the end of Edward I.'s reign as its date.† Its great peculiarity is the extraordinarily high-pitched roof, resting at an angle seemingly possible only to a timber roof, yet formed of solid blocks of ashlar, "laid like common pavement both within and without," which thus "make many to wonder that it does not fall in."‡

* Ref. to "Camera Oxonium" (*sic*) in Reg. 1683, 1772, &c. Also *cf.* Wood, "Life," ii. 249, Note, 7. *Cf.* "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1797, p. 377.

† *Cf.* Rogers, "Prices," i. 486. Oxf. Arch. Soc., 1851, p. 22.

‡ Pointer, p. 16, *cf.* Gutch. Willis and Clark, iii. 475.

This "Exchequer" or "Stackarium"* (*sic*) was often employed for College meetings, and the great lower and upper doors, each with three huge locks, show that in its original devotion to the bursars' use it did not belie its title.

The foundations of the Sacristy were being dug in 1311, as is shown by this entry for the week ending March 27 of that year:

"Item in stipendio duorum operariorum per sex dies ad fodiendum fundamenta vestiarii ijs." †

At times College meetings were held here.‡ But after the eighteenth century it was put to very alien uses. From 1691 to 1827 the College had brewed its beer in a building in the Grove, and allowed Oriel College also to make use of this at the rate of 12*s.* a time. But in 1827 this old brew-house was pulled down, and the Sacristy devoted to this purpose, the doorway into the Chancel being blocked up! Only the year before it had hardly escaped becoming the College bakery. This use continued till 1878, when the brewing utensils were sold. The Sacristy was repaired and a new roof and new upper windows were added in 1886, when the College Manuscripts and College "Chaucer" were transferred here from the Library.

### The Fellows' Quadrangle.

The foundation-stone of this quadrangle (which measures about 100 feet square) was laid on September 13, 1608. John Acroyde of Halifax and Thomas Holt of York were chief builders. After eighteen months

* *E.g.*, "Mert. Arch." ii. 17, p. 79, and Reg. *passim*.

† Willis and Clark, iii. 251.

‡ *E.g.*, Aug. 1, 1647.

spent in searching for capable masons, the building began to be energetically pushed forward in January 1610, and was finished by the end of September of that year. Acroyde was paid over £600, and Holt £430. The stone was obtained from Headington quarry, the timber from Stow Wood and Shotover. In 1611 the little postern gates in the south wall were blocked up and the present south entrance made. In the next year over the large gateway were carved various arms, including the Royal Arms of James I., and the founder's with a mitre.

This gateway is an elaborate specimen of the classical taste of the age, displaying the four orders of column—viz. (from the bottom), Roman Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, Composite. The spaces between the columns were filled with Gothic panelling, but the whole gateway somewhat fails in beauty. As thus finished the new quadrangle had no battlements. These were added to the sides, as to the south side of the Hall which closes this quadrangle on the north, in 1622. In the centre of the east and west sides, these battlements are raised by successive steps to form a pyramidical shape, rather fantastic than beautiful, and on each step was placed a little stone pyramid. These tiny pyramids may be seen as then existing in a view of this quadrangle of the reign of George II., though they have since been removed. The blank space of wall thus secured in the centre of each side was adorned with a painted and gilded sundial and the insignia of the College. These were regilded in 1759, but are now non-existent. On the west side is now a clock; on the east a blank space. The turf was laid down in 1838. In 1866 a Fellow offered £1000 to erect a cloister round part of this quadrangle. This

offer was accepted by the College, and the design of the same hangs to-day in the bursar's room. But the then bursar charged with its execution took no steps in the matter, and the College, returning at the end of a long vacation, was relieved to find that only its tacit acquiescence (gladly conceded) was needed for the abandonment of this curious project.*

### The Senior Common Room.

The first of Oxford Common Rooms was instituted in 1661, and now occupies two rooms on the second floor of the west side of the Fellows' quadrangle, the second room (which had been the senior chaplain's) being appropriated to this purpose in 1811. The Common Room proper was wainscoted in 1671–80. A new ceiling was made and its wainscot cleaned in 1762. On its walls hang portraits of Chambers (given by Stephen Edwardes), Jewell, Burleigh, and of the Rev. G. N. Freeling, Fellow 1852–1892, and Chaplain (all transferred here recently from the Hall), Cowley,† Wyclif (presented by the Warden), and others. Over all presides a cast of the founder's head, copied from a corbel of the Chapel.

The dark panelling of the walls, the rich colour of the centre table, the beautiful silver sconces, need but the firelight to make the room's contrast to a dark winter night outside complete.

### The Grove and New Buildings.

The Merton Grove lay on the west and south of the church. Its beauty in old days, before the builder and

* The Register is the authority throughout, save for the 1622 changes, for which *vide* the Computus Peter Turner, March–Nov. 1622. Neither Rogers, "Prices," v. 514, nor Willis and Clark, iii. 531, add anything.

† *Cf. supra*, Note, p. 123.

architect invaded it with rude hand and poorer taste, is shown in old engravings. Protected from the gaze of the passer-by in Merton Street by a high stone wall on the north, in its enclosure flourished elm, chestnut, sycamore, and ash. Felled ever and again though these trees were when Merton College listened so readily to the loud complaints of their Corpus neighbours,* new generations of trees sprang up and flourished till came the years of doom, 1861–1864.

That new rooms must be built to keep pace with the increasing numbers of the College was as necessary as it was desirable. But what words are adequate to describe the indignation of the present generation when it reads the resolutions *passed* by the College in May 1861?

"That it is not inexpedient to remove any portion of the Library.

"That it is inexpedient to adopt the alteration of the Library proposed by Mr. Butterfield.

"That the College will not decline to take into consideration a plan which involves the destruction of Mob Quadrangle.

"That it being understood that the College is agreed to the entire demolition (if necessary) of Mob Quadrangle, &c. &c."

Glaring, ugly, pretentious, the present new buildings, opened in 1864, may be justly anathematised. But at least one thought may tend to console the Mertonian as he hurries by: Fate might have dealt even a harsher blow to his College. And an especial niche is ensured in the grateful memory of all Mertonians to the then Sub-Warden, Charles Savile Currer, who secured, and to the present Warden, who supported, against the reiterated opposition of the then Warden, the rescinding of the above miserable resolutions, and established

* *E.g.*, in 1706, 1739, 1756, 1771, 1775, 1790, &c.

once and for all the principle of "the preservation of the Library intact under all circumstances."

THE GARDEN.

Hortus delitiæ domus politæ
Quo Mertona minus beata cultu
Vincit cultior et trahit sorores,
Quis te carmine scribat eleganti,
Quale Mundities tuas decebit?
* * * *
Frondes implicitæ super coronant;
Libens continuas subitis umbras:
Una ad horridulæ modum cavernæ
In longum porrigitur petente rictu.
* * * *
Passim in arbore figitur sedile
Fultum cortice, racemulis opertum.
Hic paucas metues sedens procellas
Et tantum Jove grandinante sparsus
Securus pluvias rides minores.
* * * *
Hinc edita Montis elevantur,
Hunc solum Artificis vides laborem;
Captas frigora, liberumque solem
Campis desuper incubans amœnis.
* * * *
Hic tu seu lapidem tenes libellum,
Ut nunquam tibi sic placeat libellus;
Seu quid de propria roges Minerva,
Ut nunquam tibi promptior Minerva est;
Seu blandos ibi misceas susurros,
Ut nunquam tibi dulcior sodalis;
Seu carmen meditaberis venustum,
Nunquam lenius evocata Musa.

The Merton poet-bishop sings worthily the praises of the Merton garden, and of the fierce contests at bowls by the "festi positâ togâ Togati."* Unintelligent foreigners visiting the gardens, "considered

* Earle, "Hortus Mertonensis," ap. Aubrey. Surrey, iv. 167, c. 1674. Perhaps the game may yet be revived.

the finest in Oxford," might write of its "dark low walks, which as they have no proper air are not pleasant."* The Oxonian knew better. To him it was "large and pleasant," "encompassed with noble terrass walks and shaded in the midst,"† whether he plunged into the jungle of "thicket" or "wilderness," or found his palace of delight in the summer-house. Nor, despite its small size, well-nigh forgotten through the cunning devices of the designer, can any garden be found to-day in Oxford to surpass it in intrinsic beauty of colour and form, in shrubs and trees, or in the delightful views it affords, whether of towers and spires, or meadows and river.

As has been seen, the whole of the present garden site was acquired by the College by about the middle of the fifteenth century.‡ On south and east it was flanked by the city wall. This to-day is comparatively low, just as in Anthony Wood's day, when it was

"patched, propped up with buttresses, and low. Yet before the ground was raised up to it and the top with the battlements broken downe, was almost as high again as 'tis now."§

In the civil wars a culverin was planted thereon for defence, and unwritten tradition reports that a cavalier was shot for cowardice by his own party on the eastern terrace. The bastion on the southern front still preserves the memory of more warlike times, though consecrated now to more peaceful uses.‖

In Loggan's view of the University (1675) Merton garden presents a stiff, Dutch-like, appearance, cut up

* Von Uffenbach, ap. Wordsworth, p. 364, A.D. 1710.
† Ayliffe, i. 277, A.D. 1723.
‡ *Supra*, pp. 59, 60.
§ Wood, "City," c. 12, pp. 249–50.
‖ *Cf.* Twyne, MSS. xxiii. 765–7. Wood, "City," c. 12, pp.245–47.

into squares with trees duly planted in order. Of like character is the Warden's garden, the most prominent feature of which is "the Lady Clayton's" new summer-house, a large stone building, mounted by sixteen steps.* This building on the south wall of the Warden's garden was still in existence as late as 1798.†

The present summer-house was built in the year when the terrace was raised—viz., 1706–7.‡ The present north wall on the street was built in 1712, and the trees were planted along it in 1744, while the door into the street was made in 1818. The grass on and below the terrace was sown in 1736 and 1743; that in the centre of the garden in 1785. The walls dividing it from the Warden's garden were taken down in 1855 and 1859, and the light iron fencing put in their place on the south. The starling-beloved mulberry-tree probably was planted in James I.'s reign.§ The sundial was presented by George Tierney, Fellow, and was placed on its pedestal in 1830.

Apart from terrace walks and views and the yew hedge haunted ever by robin and wren, the trees form the glory of the garden. Sycamores existed there in 1680, even perhaps the graceful trees of to-day. When the shapely chestnuts, chief seat of the parliament of rooks, were planted I cannot find. But chiefest of all is the great tall lime avenue, beloved of the Merton nut-hatch, on the north of the southern terrace, eight trees on the southern side and seven on the northern. These were in existence in 1760, when the avenue was

* *See* Frontispiece and *supra*, Part i. c. 5, p. 149.
† *Cf.* Skelton, "Oxonia," ii. plate 98.
‡ Reg. *Cf.* "Oxoniana," iv. 223.
§ *Cf.* Willis and Clark, iii. 583–5.

thinned of six trees on each side. At every season of the year the limes afford unfailing delight. There, in winter, is the perfect view down the avenue from the eastern terrace to the grey Jacobean building at the end; * in spring, the brightest green in Oxford and the perpetual song of thrush and blackbird; in summer, the fragrance of the lime flower, and the constant humming of the bees; and in autumn still the College rejoices in its limes:

> "Touch'd with yellow by hot
> Summer, but under them still,
> In September's bright afternoon,
> Shadow, and verdure, and cool."

* *Cf.* the (late autumn) view in Plate IV. showing a little part of the garden, including the finest of the sycamores in the foreground, and the Fellows' Quadrangle behind.

# CHAPTER V

## CUSTOMS, FESTIVALS, AND ATHLETICS

As Merton is the oldest College, so ancient customs were long and lovingly cherished within its walls. For many centuries the Society did not "go down" for Christmas, and the oldest and quaintest of the usages clustered round that feast.

### The Rex Fabarum.

From the first foundation of the College every year on the Vigil of S. Edmund's Day (November 19) the juniors of the Society gathered round the fire in Hall to elect a King of Christmas or Misrule, the "Rex nostri regni Fabarum." The outgoing Rex despatched letters under seal purporting to be sent from some place abroad, and his envoys appeared "duly robed" and delivered them to the bachelor Fellows.* These then,

"standing, sometimes walking, round the fire, there reading the contents of them, would choose the senior fellow that had not yet borne that office, whether he was a Doctor of Divinity, Law, or Physick, and being so elected had power put into his hands of punishing all misdemeanours done in time of Christmas, either by imposing exercises on the juniors, or putting into the stocks at the end of the hall any of the servants, with other punishments that were sometimes very ridiculous. He had always a chair provided for him, and would sit in great state when any speeches were spoken,

* Reg. *passim*.

or justice to be executed, and so this his authority would continue till Candlemas."*

At Candlemas the senior members of the Society took up the task of entertainment, and their festivity, also, it seems, as old as the College, and revived after lapse in 1485, was known as the

### Ignis Regentis or Regentium.†

After supper in Hall some regent master would entertain the masters and bachelors with a splendid feast, wine, fire, and other amusements, thus cheering the little Society in the black depths of winter.

The custom of the "Regent's Fire" is not mentioned after 1514. The last King of the Realm of Beans was Jasper Heywood, elected in 1557. Another custom lasted longer, as it began later.

### The Satrapæ or Tibicines.

In 1506, on New Year's Day, the "Satrapæ" of the city appeared in Merton Hall, and sang a song to the Fellows. They then claimed payment. "With gentle words and with some kindliness we thrice denied it to them on this occasion," says the Register.

"So they departed to the College of our Lady Mary Magdalene, where, as we heard, they received a reply very similar."

Quite undiscouraged, the "Satraps" repeated the experiment, and the custom grew up of paying them 6*s.* 8*d.* each year for their music. But the College always most carefully safeguarded its generosity, adding to the record of payment such phrases as "ex mera bene-

* Wood, "Annals," ii. 136–137.

† Reg. *passim*. The second name from Wood *loc. cit.*

volentia," "by sheer good will of the fellows," and so forth. The most amusing entry is that of 1559:

"The satraps of the city came to sing one song, which task of theirs indeed they got through, but not without complaint fairly due that he who had sung before us had been as it were snatched from sudden death, as all said with one voice. We gave them their 6s 8d from sheer benevolence, for we put their singing down to their lack of skill."

Dismayed, perhaps, by this, when the "Satraps" next appear on the scene they are now no chanting chorus, but mere "flute-players who blow to us in the morning."* In 1632 the payment ceased finally, 10*s.* instead being given to the "Citharœdi Academiæ."

By this time the old Christmas merriment was revived in another shape, but as usual the freshmen provided the sport.

"Christmas appearing there were fires of charcole made in the common Hall on All Saints' eve, All Saints' day and night, on the holydayes their nights and eves between that time and Xmas day; then on Xmas eve, Xmas day, and holydayes, and their nights, and on Candlemas eve, Candlemas day and night.

"At all these fires every night, which began to be made a little after five of the clock, the senior under-graduates would bring into the hall the juniors or freshmen between that time and six of the clock, and there make them sit downe on a forme in the middle of the hall, joyning to the declaiming desk: which done, every one in order was to speake some pretty apothegme, or make a jest or bull, or speake some eloquent nonsense, to make the company laugh. But if any of the freshmen came off dull, or not cleverly, some of the forward or pragmatical seniors would *tuck* them, that is, set the nail of their thumb to their chin just under the lower lipp, and by the help of their other fingers under the chin they would give him a mark which sometimes would produce blood."†

This gentle and humorous custom perished in due

* *E.g.*, 1603.

† Wood, "Life," i. 133–134. His own speech as freshman, in 1647 (pp. 138 *sq.*), survives as a type.

course of time. And Christmas in the middle of the eighteenth century was celebrated but by the Society

"meeting together in the Hall on Xmas eve . . . to sing a psalm and drink a grace cup to one another, called Poculum Charitatis." *

The Postmasters, however, maintained a Christmas custom of their own known as

### The Kill-Bull.

"'Tis a custom for one of these scholars to take it by turns to be steward every week, whose office it is to cater for the rest of the society and order of the Butcher every day what meat he pleases.

"'Tis a custom likewise for this Butcher of theirs, once every year about Christmas time, to invite 'em all to a treat at his house; at which time he used to provide a Bull for the steward (if he pleased) to knock down with his own hand, whence this treat came to be called the Kill-Bull." †

Christmas became in time but one of the recurrent feast days or "gaudies" of the Society. Of these as many as seven were celebrated three centuries ago, when the College provided its Fellows at each course with "French wine, vulgo 'claret.'" These were reduced to four in 1661, and this number remained, though the days were changed, till the present century. Since 1880 two Capon days are kept as feasts in Hall—viz., Boar's Head Day on November 20, and Shrove Tuesday, besides a gaudy just after the Encænia, usually every third year.

### The Black Night.

These amusements were for long centuries but brief breaks in the year's routine of work, which had but one summer vacation. That up to the eighteenth century at least the Mertonian was expected to work hard, and

* Pointer, p. 20. † Pointer, p. 23.

was exercised frequently in the traditional philosophic discussions known as the Merton "Variations," is certain. His recreation was usually tennis or fives in the ball-court in the Merton Grove. But Nature rebelled sometimes at night, and claimed the antiquity and fame even of the schoolmen for her justification.

"'In Logick,' says Dr. Plot, 'the subtle Joannes Duns Scotus, fellow of Merton College, was the father of the sect of the Reals; and his scholar Gulielmus Occham . . . of the same house father of the sect of the Nominals; betwixt whom, as the story goes, there falling out a hot dispute (Scotus being then Dean of the College and Occham a bachelor fellow) wherein, tho' the latter is said to have obtained the better, yet being but an inferior at parting submitted himself with the rest of the bachelors to the dean in this form: "Domine, quid faciemus?" as it were begging punishment for their boldness and arguing; to whom Scotus returning this answer, "Ite, et facite quid vultis," they forthwith brake open the buttery and kitchen doors, taking all they could meet with, making merry with it all night: which tis said gave occasion to their observing the same diversion to this very day, whenever the dean keeps the bachelors at disputations till twelve at night, which they now commonly call a Black Night.'" *

At these revels the bachelors, it is said, "committed great rudeness." † Thus even if it was not on one of these occasions in 1484 that "the chaplains were annoyed at their late service by immoderate and indiscrete revels," surely it can only have been the bitterness provoked by long disputations which caused one bachelor Fellow to call another in 1606

"Suem seu porcum, Angl. Hog et Pig."

The last "Black Night" was "given" by John Conant, Senior Dean, on December 16, 1685.‡ Not that festive assemblies have ever perished from Merton. Even as late in this grave age as 1775 one ended in the

* "Oxoniana," ii. 30, 31. † Wood, "Life," ii. 359.
‡ Wood, "Life," iii. 172. Pointer, p. 18.

"enormous and scandalous offence" of one Postmaster and two Commoners raising a tumult whereby a number of windows were "broken with stones and battered with clubs, to the great danger and detriment of the inhabitants." Traditions are modified, even as the missiles and engines of war, but none the less there remain forms of common enjoyment not wholly dissimilar from those of John Duns Scotus and his Black Night.

And yet interests have changed. In the younger Society of to-day, when freed from modern "disputations," no longer logical subtleties or casuistric introspection, but the talk of athletic rivalry and sports engrosses the greater attention. The College wins triumphs not only in the schools, and calls on all its members to strive to better its position in other fields as well as those of learning. Is not this combination in the same scholar of study and sport long since acclaimed, and that by no mean name:

> And, as for me, though that my wit be lyte,
> On bokes for to rede I me delyte,
> And in myn herte have hem in reverence;
> And to hem yeve swich lust and swich credence,
> That ther is wel unethe game noon
> That from my bokes make me to goon,
> But hit be other upon the holyday,
> Or elles in the Ioly tyme of May;
> When that I here the smale foules singe,
> And that the floures ginne for to springe,
> Farwel my studie, as lasting that sesoun!"

We turn then to the athletic records of the College during this century.

### The Boats.

In 1838 the Merton eight first made its appearance on the river. Starting seventh it promptly went up

to third, rising above S. John's, Brasenose, Worcester, and Christ Church. Continuing its upward career in 1839 it bumped Exeter and Balliol, and went head, where it remained the next night. A flag on the College tower, despite the Proctors, signalled the success. But the eight fell again two places before the races were over. Dispirited perhaps at this, Merton put no boat on the river in 1840 or 1841, and a temporary combination in 1842 with Corpus merely rowed three nights, lost one place, and then took off. The plan of a joint boat was never again tried. But 1844 was a year of great deeds. Starting thirteenth the Merton eight rose no less than eleven places in nine nights. Lincoln and S. John's took off, in terror doubtless at the prospect. But Wadham, Worcester, Exeter, Pembroke, Trinity, Corpus, University, Brasenose, and Oriel, in succession, were bumped by hard rowing. Yet one night's racing, and only Christ Church remained to stay Merton from the headship of the river.

"Solus iamque ipso superest in fine Cloanthus."

In their fear, it is said, the "House" men summoned up old oarsmen from the country, and Merton failed to bump. In 1845 and 1846 the eight rowed third, but in 1847–9 and 1851–60 no boat was manned. Hunting, the College "grinds" at Moreton-in-the-Marsh, and, above all, cricket, absorbed all energies. Nor were the years 1861–64 years of fame for the boat. Then matters improved. In 1865 it rose six places to ninth, and in 1866 again to fifth. In 1869 it was ninth again, but never again rose even as high as this, until at last in this year 1898, the Merton eight performed a feat unequalled in the eights since Hertford's like achievement in 1887, and by making seven bumps in six days rose once more to

ninth. Corpus, Jesus, Pembroke, Keble, S. John's, Exeter, Queen's, were the victims. So at last a Merton eight represented the College at Henley. The three most successful eights were manned as follows:

| | 1844 | 1865 | 1898 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bow | J. B. Dalison | A. S. Gulston | T. H. Walker |
| 2 | [p]F. Compton[1] | [p]J. R. Hall | F. H. Melland |
| 3 | [p]M. J. Blacker | W. H. Foster | R. H. D. Tompson |
| 4 | S. H. Giffard[2] | [p]M. Creighton[6] | E. T. Master |
| 5 | J. Spankie | [b]W. L. Freeman | F. H. Lewin |
| 6 | [p]J. F. Mackarness[3] | St. V. Peel | W. R. Parr |
| 7 | [b]W. U. Heygate[4] | [pb]R. T. Raikes | W. G. King-Peirce |
| Stroke | [pb]W. C. Stapylton | [pb]R. G. Marsden[7] | [p]J. G. E. Craik |
| Cox | F. Bathurst[5] | J. L. Shaw | J. R. Hammond |

[1] Fellow of All Souls. [2] Lord High Chancellor. [3] Bp. of Oxford. [4] M.P. Leicester. [5] Also Cricket Blue. Archdeacon of Bedford. [6] Bishop of London. Rowed in Merton Eight, 1864-5-6-7. [7] Stroked Merton Eight, 1865-6-7-8-9.

It is open to argue that as a Bishop of Oxford and Lord Halsbury rowed for the College in the first, and the Bishop of London in the second, the third or 1898 eight must contain some most eminent Merton statesman or ecclesiastic whom the future will reveal.

The following Mertonians have served against Cambridge:

J. Compton, 2 in 1839 (*a*).
[p]J. G. Mountain, bow in 1840 (*a*); 3 in 1841 (*a*).
[p]I. J. I. Pocock, 2 in 1840 (*a*).
[p]W. Chetwynd-Stapylton, 2 in 1845 (*a*); 7 in 1846 (*a*).
F. J. Richards, cox. in 1845 (*a*).
W. U. Heygate, 3 in 1846 (*a*).
[p]R. T. Raikes, bow in 1865 (*b*); and 1866 (*b*).
W. L. Freeman, 3 in 1866 (*b*).
[p]R. G. Marsden, stroke in 1867 (*b*); 4 in 1868 (*b*).
A. R. Harding, 4 in 1874 (*a*).
[p]F. E. Robeson, 4 in 1892 (*b*).

(*a*) Oxford lost. (*b*) Oxford won.

[p] Postmaster. [b] Blue.

W. Chetwynd-Stapylton also rowed bow in the Etona Club boat which won the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley in 1844, and bow in the O.U.B.C. winners of the Steward's Cup in 1844, 1845, and 1846. R. G. Marsden rowed four in the Oxford Etonian Club boat which won the Grand Challenge Cup in 1866 and 1867. R. T. Raikes rowed bow in the winning pair in the O.U.B.C. races of 1865. [p]I. J. I. Pocock in 1841, and W. L. Freeman in 1866, won the sculls.

The Merton Torpid also has at times excelled in strength. In 1888 it made seven bumps, a feat not before achieved in the history of the Torpid races. Stroked by H. H. Williams, it overcame Jesus, Pembroke, Lincoln, S. John's, University, Wadham, Trinity. In 1892 it rose four places to sixth (stroke L. C. R. Messel), bumping Exeter, Keble, Christ Church II., and Corpus. A rise of seventeen places in six years from bottom to sixth was then duly celebrated by a Bump Supper. Both Eight and Torpid are now (1898) in the first division.

"Tum pudor incendat vires et conscia virtus."

### Cricket.

The following Mertonians have played against Cambridge:

H. C. T. Hildyard in 1845 (*a*) and 1846 (*b*).

F. Bathurst in 1848 (*b*).

C. J. B. Marsham in 1851 (*a*).

W. W. Parker in 1852 (*b*), 1853 (*b*), and 1855 (*b*).

C. D. Marsham in 1854 (*b*), 1855 (*b*), 1856 (*a*), 1857 (*b*), and 1858 (*b*). The most famous of Mertonian cricketers, he captained the Oxford eleven in 1857 and 1858, on both occasions leading his team to victory. As a bowler he chiefly excelled, taking, *e.g.*, 6 wickets for 19 runs in 1854 (2nd innings); 5 for 38 in 1856 (1st innings); 5 for 31 in 1857 (1st innings), besides making top score of 36

for Oxford in this innings; and 5 for 42 (1st innings), 6 for 17 (2nd innings) in 1858. No cricketer ever served his University better.

E. M. Kenney in 1866 (*b*), 1867 (*a*), and 1868 (*a*).

P J. Maude in 1873 (*b*), another successful bowler.

A. O. Whiting in 1881 (*b*) and 1882 (*a*).

(*a*) Cambridge won. (*b*) Oxford won.

It thus may be argued that whenever a Mertonian has played in the Oxford eleven Cambridge has suffered twice as many defeats as has Oxford.

### Rugby Football.

Since the starting of the O.U.R.F.C. in 1869, six Mertonians have played against Cambridge:

E. C. Frazer in 1873 (*c*), 1874 (*c*), and 1875 (*b*). In this last season he played for England *v.* Ireland.

C. G. Wade in 1882–3 (*b*), 1883 (*b*), 1884 (*b*). In this last season he played for England *v.* Scotland, *v.* Ireland, and *v.* Wales.

C. D. Baker in 1891 (*a*), 1892 (*c*), 1893 (*b*), being captain of the team this last year.

A. H. Colvile in 1892 (*c*), 1893 (*b*).

G. L. McEwan in 1895 (*a*).

PL. M. Crump in 1896 (*b*).

(*a*) Cambridge won. (*b*) Oxford won. (*c*) Drawn.

Again, the curious may note that whenever a Mertonian has been a member of the Oxford team the proportion of Oxford victories to defeats is 3 : 1.

### Association Football.

Three Mertonians have played against Cambridge:

PJ. H. J. Ellison in 1875 (*b*).

PT. H. French in 1880 (*a*), 1882 (*b*), 1883 (*a*).

PG. R. Wood in 1891 (*b*), 1892 (*a*).

### Athletic Sports.

Fourteen Mertonians have gained their "Blue" in the Inter-'Varsity Athletic sports:

F. H. Gooch in 1864 (Broad Jump, won); 1865 (Broad Jump, won; High Jump, won).

PA. A. Hannam in 1864 (Mile, second).

H. C. Jollye in 1864 (100 yards), 1865 (100 yards, won).

A. King in 1865 (Two miles).

W. C. Stuart in 1866 (High Jump).

PR. V. Somers-Smith in 1868 (Quarter-mile); 1869 (Mile, second); 1870 (Quarter-mile, won).

H. F. Nicholl in 1870 and 1871 (Hammer, second).

R. Helme in 1872 (Mile).

J. A. Fraser in 1876 (Weight, second).

M. H. Paine in 1882 (Quarter-mile and Broad Jump); 1883 (Quarter-mile); 1884 (Quarter-mile, won; and Broad Jump); 1885 (Quarter-mile, second).

PW. P. Montgomery in 1885 (High Jump, first equal), and in all three years, 1886, 1887, 1888, victor in the High Jump, surmounting 5 feet 9 inches in the last year.

H. J. Scott in 1889 (High Jump, first equal).

W. J. R. Watson in 1892 (Weight, and Hammer, second).

J. R. F. Frazer in 1892 (Hammer).

These are the Athletic records of Merton College.

### The Debating Society.

This society met for the first time in its existence on February 21, 1881, under the presidency of F. W. Newland, and debated that night on the vexed questions of the policy of her Majesty's Government, and the expediency of allowing smoking at the meetings of the society during the training of Eight and Torpid. The latter discussion raged week after week, and is, indeed, perennial; the former was concluded in a fortnight. From that day to this the society has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence, preserving ever jealously its

records. It met in private rooms till October 23, 1882, when the hall of S. Alban Hall became the constant scene of its activity. The "arbitrary conduct of the authorities," however, prohibited smoking here, and the House, "regretting" this, decided in the summer of 1884 to return once more to private rooms. Its migrations, however, were at an end when the Junior Common Room was instituted at the close of that same year, and here every Monday night in term it gathers, save when on some summer evening it adjourns "to the Mob Quad."

On October 17, 1894, the society (H. Ellis being then its president) entertained a large Mertonian company at a dinner in Hall to commemorate its four hundredth meeting. The end of 1898 has seen it celebrate its five hundredth in quiet prosperity. Four of its presidents have been also presidents of the Oxford Union Society—viz.: PW. Alison Phillips (1884), C. J. Blacker (1887), PJ. A. V. Magee (1891), PE. C. Bentley (1897). There exist also in the College a Church Society (founded on November 29, 1875), and a Bodley Essay Society of recent foundation.

[*Note.*—My best thanks are due to the captains of the various College clubs—viz., to Messrs. J. G. E. Craik (Boat Club and Debating Society), T. S. Foster (Rugby Football), C. W. H. Cochrane (Assoc. Football and Cricket), F. P. C. Walker (Church Soc.), who have put themselves to no small trouble of inquiry in assisting me to prepare this Athletic and Society record. To the first named, for also most readily placing at my disposal the splendidly complete records which exist for the Boat Club (from 1880), and Debating Society, my special thanks are owed. Unhappily, for the other athletic clubs the College possesses no written records, and the 'Varsity, it seems, only such for the Rugby Team. The details concerning the crew of 1844 I owe to the information of Canon Stapylton, the stroke (to whose energy no small part of the successes of 1844-46 is due); those of 1865 to the photograph to-day in the College Barge, where are preserved photographs of Merton crews as far back as 1860.]

# CHAPTER VI

## "IN PIAM MEMORIAM"

"Injungo autem Scholaribus prædictis in virtute Dei et sub optentu felicitatis vitæ præsentis et futuræ ut cum præstante Domino ad uberiorem fortunam devenerint domum prædictam in licitis et honestis promovere studeant ac ejus defensioni necnon et eorum quæ ad eam pertinent cum opus fuerit diligenter insistant."

THIS charge of the founder to his scholars of all generations finds a place in his earliest code of statutes, and is repeated in those that follow. As it is solemnly enunciated, so it has never been entirely neglected. And Merton College in its characteristic and constant toast of "In piam memoriam" cherishes ever in gratitude the memory of its benefactors in past years. Nor were these only scholars of the foundation. Each century as it passes adds to the roll. These may be chosen as representative of each: *

*Thirteenth Century:*

1264. Walter de Merton, *cf.* Part i. chapter i.
1267. Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I., *cf.* page 13.
1268. Richard, King of the Romans, *cf.* page 13.
1295. Ela, Countess of Warwick, *cf.* page 37.

*Fourteenth Century:*

1318. King Edward II., *cf.* pages 59, 60.

* In this list [f] = Fellow; [p] = Postmaster; [c] = Commoner. Benefactors to the Library (for which see p. 239) are here not included, unless they gave other gifts to the College as well.

1331. { [f] John of Abyndon. / [f] William of Haryngton. / [f] Simon of Yiftele. } *Cf.* pages 60, 61.

1376. [f] William Rede, Bishop of Chichester, *cf.* pages 194, 228, 229.
[f] John Wyllyot, *cf.* pages 54–56.

c. 1400. [f] Thomas Dollyng: left all his goods to the College.

*Fifteenth Century:*

1422–1438. Henry Abyndon, Warden, *cf.* page 212.

c. 1450. Sir Walter Hungerford, £100 for building Tower.

1455–1471. Henry Sever, Warden, *cf.* pages 218, 239, 253.

1489. [p] Thomas Kemp, Bishop of London, *cf.* page 63.

1492. [f] Thomas Lynley, £40 and plate.

c. 1495. John Marshall, Bishop of Llandaff, £40 and books.

1483–1507. Richard Fitzjames, Warden, *cf.* pages 66, 210, 253.

*Sixteenth Century:*

1502. [f] Thomas Lee, *cf.* page 194.

1503. [f] John Martok, £100, houses, and lectern.

1514. [f] Ralph Hampsterley, *cf.* page 185.

1520. [f] Simon Mollond, £20.

1558. [f] Thomas Hewes, lands.

1569–1586. Thomas Bickley, Warden, *cf.* page 92.

1587. [f] Henry Jervis, £143.

1588. [f] James Leech, £200.

*Seventeenth Century:*

1604. [f] John Chamber, *cf.* pages 186, 187.

1613. [f] Sir Thomas Bodley, *cf.* page 194.

1614. [pf] Thomas Jessop, *cf.* page 188.

1651. [f] William Simonson, £100.

1664. [f] Griffin Higgs, Dean of Lichfield, *cf.* pages 162, 241.

1665. Charles Sedley, *cf.* page 188.

1671. [f] Alexander Fisher, *cf.* pages 214, 215.

1674. Edward Reynolds (Warden), Bishop of Norwich, £100.

1678. [f] Peter Nicholls, £200.

1694. [c] Edmund Arnold, *cf.* page 188.

*Eighteenth Century:*

1704–1709. Edmund Martin, Warden, £90.

1720. [pf] Joseph Watkinson, £40: "a small sum I confess, but agreeable to the meanness of my present circumstances: a token of my gratitude to the College."

1732. [c] Edward Worth, *cf.* page 188.

1732. [e] Henry Jackson, *cf.* page 187.
1754. Dorothy Vernon, *cf.* page 187.
1782. Mary Sympson, *cf.* page 221.
1790. Philip Barton, £1000, in memory of his brother the late Warden.

*Nineteenth Century:*

1814. Scrope Berdmore, Warden, £1000.
1853. [f] Robert Pigou, over £6000.
1882. [pf] George Hammond, £2000.

Commemorations in Chapel of our benefactors were frequent up to the Reformation, but since then have become so erratic that to-day the College thus preserves the memory only of Thomas Jessop (on the wrong day) and Henry Jackson, besides the founder's. This is as arbitrary a choice as it is an entirely inadequate and ungrateful memorial. The following is the true Merton Calendar:

Fixed: Jan. 15. *Richard Fitzjames.
,, 16. Ralph Hampsterley.
Feb. 24. Ela, Countess of Warwick.
March 15. Thomas Lee.
,, 28. Thomas and John Kemp.
April 23. Thomas Lynley.
June 24. †Henry Jackson.
July 5. *Henry Sever.
July 20. *†Founder.
Aug. 31. John Martok.
Oct. 18. *John Wyllyot.
,, 28. *Founder.
Nov. 4. *William Rede.
Dec. 18. *†Founder.

Moveable: Palm Sunday, *†Founder.
Second Thursday after Easter, †Thomas Jessop.

Anniversaries of others, kept at times in past days, but less worthy of commemoration, are here omitted.

* An asterisk is set against the benefactors of very primary importance, a † against those whose commemoration is still celebrated.

To-day at the close of every service in the Chapel (save on the rare occasions of "Founder's Prayers," when the following prayers are said in English) is recited in Latin the commemorative thanksgiving of the College for its founder and other benefactors; on "surplice-days" the Warden, Fellows, and Chaplains, standing in the centre of the choir; on other days all standing in their usual places. And fitly, therefore, it may close this history of Merton College.

℣. In memoria æterna erit Justus.
℟. *Ab Auditu mali non timebit.*
℣. Justorum animæ in manu Dei sunt.
℟. *Nec attinget eos cruciatus.*
℣. Domine Deus, resurrectio et vita credentium, qui semper es laudandus tam in viventibus quam in defunctis, agimus tibi gratias pro Fundatore nostro Waltero de Merton, cæterisque Benefactoribus nostris, quorum beneficiis hic ad pietatem et studia literarum alimur, rogantes ut nos his donis ad tuam gloriam recte utentes una cum illis ad resurrectionis gloriam immortalem perducamur, per Christum Dominum nostrum.
℟. *Amen.*

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

# APPENDICES

## A.—AUTHORITIES

The following are the *chief* authorities for the history of the College which I have consulted:

A.—*MSS.*

1. Merton Register. Vol. i., 1482–1567; ii., 1567–1731; iii., 1731–1822; iv., 1822–1876; v., from 1876. A useful index to vols. i.–iii. by H. Hurst (1889) has been given to the College by the Warden.
2. Catalogues of Fellows. [Arch. iv. 11–18, v. 2.] See App. C.
3. Calendar of Records for Oxford, College and City, compiled by W. H. Stevenson: indispensable for the early history.
4. Other Merton Archives, in especial:
   - I. 6. Collection of Statutes, &c., from 1264—compiled 1737.
   - II. 1. Extracts from Rolls of College Officers, 1272–1422.
     2. Copy of Trusts, for Postmasters' benefactions, &c.
     3–6A. College Orders, 1768–1882.
     17. Bursars' Rolls: Hen. VI., Ed. IV., Ric. III.
     23. Liber Computi cistæ Bodley, 1615–1809.
   - III. 1–7. Libri rationarii Bursarium, 1585–1750.
   - IV. 5–10. Kilner, MSS., 6 vols., *re* founder, early history, estates, benefactions, &c.

The other Archives on shelves i.–vi. deal mainly with College estates, leases, court rolls, rentals, and many other matters of lesser importance. A complete catalogue exists.

5. Merton MSS.—*i.e.*, the whole mass of some thousands of records, all now calendared and arranged. The vast majority deal with the College estates, but of very particular interest for the College history and buildings are the following:

(*a*) Bursars' Rolls, 1276–1424—viz., Nos. 3612–3617, 3603, 3607–9, 3745–6.

(*b*) Sub-Wardens', Chaplains', and other ditto, 1277–1451—viz., Nos. 3964*a*, *b*, 3969, 3982, 3990–1, 4049*a*, *b*, 4052, 4054–5, 4058–4063, 4099, 4102–4103*b*.

"Thos. Robert's" Rolls. See App. C.

6. General MSS.—viz.:

Twyne, iii., 583–9, 591–605, 611–613, 619–625; xxii., 320–322; xxiii., 755–764. Mainly excerpts from 1, 4, and 5.

Wood, MS. Bodl., 594 *ad fin*, extracts from 1 and Statutes.

MS. Ballard, 46 and 46*. See App. C.

MS. Wood, F. 31, 159–168, 173–4, 200, 220, various.

MS. Wood, D., 32, 153, 485, 589. Merton writers.

MS., Tanner, 456. Letters of A. W., Aubrey, and others. Collections at Merton, extracts, notes on founder, library, writers, Mertonians, &c. *Cf.* App. C. Sent to Coll. by John Pointer, sometime Chaplain, April 1752.

B.—*Printed:*

1. Wood's Works—viz., "City of Oxford," 2 vols. (O.H.S., xv., xvii.); "Life and Times," ed. A. Clark, 4 vols. (*ib.* xix., xxi., xxvi., xxx.); "History and Antiquities of Colleges and Halls," ed. J. Gutch, 1786, and its Appendix, "Fasti Oxonienses," 1790.

"History and Antiquities of University," ed. J. G., 3 vols. (quoted as "Annals").

"Athenæ Oxonienses," ed. P. Bliss, 1813–1820. 4 vols.

2. Oxford Historical Society Publications, i.–xxxiv., but besides above vols. of Wood's works, especially Hearne's Collections, 1705–1714 (Vols. ii., vii., xiii., xxxiv.), and A. G. Little, "Grey Friars in Oxford" (Vol. xx.). The rest, save iv. (see *infra*), mainly incidental allusions.

3. Hobhouse. "Life of Walter de Merton," 1859.

4. Ingram. "Memorials of Oxford." 3 vols., esp. vol. i., pp. 32.

5. Brodrick. "Memorials of Merton College," 1885 (O.H.S., iv.)

6. Aubrey. "Brief Lives," 1669–1696, ed. A. Clark. 2 vols. 1898.

7. Kilner. "Pythagoras' School," privately printed; author's MS. notes.

8. Chalmers. "History," &c., of Oxford, 1810. Vol. i., 1–22.

9. Burrows. "Register of Visitors," 1647–1658. Camd. Soc. 1881.

Many other references to other works of a more general or less important character will be found given in the footnotes—*e.g.*, to "Terræ filius," 1726; "Oxoniana," 4 vols.; "Colleges of Oxford," ed. A. Clark ("Merton," by the present Warden); Scadding, "Canada and Oxford"; Oxf. Arch. Soc. Proc., New Series, ii.; Rogers, "Prices"; Pointer, "Oxoniensis Academia," 1749; Ayliffe, "Univ. of Oxford," 1723; Wordsworth, "University Life in xviii. Century," &c. &c. But especial mention must be made of Foster's invaluable "Alumni Oxonienses" in 8 volumes, and of Willis and Clark's "Architectural History of Cambridge," 3 vols. (a magnificent work which fills Oxonians with envy), even though I am unable to accept some of these two writers' statements in their references to Merton College

The *Liber Ruber:* This [Arch. i. 1] is a catalogue on parchment, of 38 leaves, dated 1288 (*cf.* fol. 14A), of the deeds relating to the then estates of the College, arranged by counties, with one or two later additions and insertions. Its name is derived either from a red cover it once possessed (Kilner, MSS. ii. p. 40*b*), or from the red lettering of names, and red capitals and guiding lines, which adorn it.

## B.—THE CLAIM TO PRIORITY

Facts and conclusions on this question are alike simple:

*Merton College:*

1264. First statutes creating a Corporation of Scholars *in Oxford* with common property and self-government.

1266–7. Acquisition of site, owned by the Community itself.

*University College:*

1249. Bequest by William of Durham of 310 marks to maintain thence 10, 11, or 12 Masters in the schools of Oxford—*i.e.*, a simple pension fund to be administered by the University. Money at first devoted to loans to scholars and purchase of houses—1253 *sqq.*—the latter *not* inhabited by any community of such Masters, but a mere property investment.

1280. Four Masters first chosen as recipients of this bounty and the University's first and earliest code of statutes for these framed. Now first they form a corporate community in any sense of the term, "when after the pattern of the nephews and scholars of Walter de Merton they were gathered under a single roof." [F. C. Conybeare on "University College" in Clark's "Colleges."]

*Balliol College:*

? 1260–69. John de Balliol makes payments to support poor scholars at Oxford in a hired house, with 8*d.* each per day for commons. "In the beginning a simple almshouse . . . and possessed (so far as we know) no sort of organisation." [R. L. Poole on "Balliol College" in Clark's "Colleges."]

1282. First code of statutes by Devorguilla, widow of John de Balliol, constituting a corporate community, but without complete self-government. This last was not gained for very many years.

The disputed claim to priority then between the three Colleges turns simply on our definition of the term "College." It may thus be summed up:

University College: A fund is created whence some individuals *presently* are going to receive money doles. If this constitutes a College, University is the earliest.

Balliol College: Certain individuals *actually* receive money doles from a living benefactor. If this actual receiving of doles constitutes a College, Balliol is the earliest.

Merton College: A corporation of scholars lives together, shares property in common, administers it, possesses a complete written code of statutes, governs itself. If this constitutes a College, Merton is the earliest.

"Does a Donation create a Society properly called a College?" (Conybeare, *loc. cit.*) For myself I answer unhesitatingly, "No." So do others who themselves are not Mertonians:

"The word 'College' is a term which properly belongs to a number of persons incorporated as colleagues for certain common purposes, and has no relation to the buildings in which they dwell. It is solely in this sense that it is employed in the charters of the early colleges in both Universities. The words applied to the buildings in the same documents are house (*domus*) and hall (*aula*)" [Willis and Clark, i. xv–xvi.]

"The collegiate system . . . that is, an incorporated body of men living together, as distinguished from students living apart in lodgings, the rent of which happens to be paid for them by some benefactor, was really inaugurated by Walter de Merton" [*ib.* xxxi.] *Cf.* also C. L. Shadwell, ap. Clark, "Colleges," pp. 87–88.

This then is the conclusion of the whole matter. If the present exhibition-holders among the "Non-Collegiate" students constitute a College, let University and Balliol fight out their rival claims to precedence.

If a College is a Corporation, a self-governing Community, and not A, B, and C receiving doles, *cadit quæstio.* Merton College is indisputably earliest. An almshouse is not a College.

# C.—SOME DISPUTED MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE

A preliminary note is needed on the Merton Catalogues of Fellows. Of these six may be mentioned:—

1. (*a*) *Catalogus Vetus* (Arch. iv. 16). This contains on parchment leaves, numbered fol. 59–67, lists of Fellows from first foundation to end of reign of Henry V., arranged alphabetically under each reign, save for reign of Henry V., where chronologically.

Probable date of this, therefore, c. 1422.

(*b*) More important still—the *originals* of lists afterwards embodied in (*a*) are preserved on back of various parchment rolls—viz., for reign of Ed. I. MS. 4154; Ed. II. 4173*b*; Ed. III. 4162; Rich. II. 4159; Hen. IV. 4186*b*; Hen. V. 4188. No. 4162 is signed "T. Robt." No. 4188 is arranged alphabetically, not as in "Cat. Vet." and endorsed "Hic continentur nomina sociorum Collegii de Merton de prima fundatione Coll. prædict. usque ad annum primum regis Henrici sexti." No. 4159 is a Sub-Warden's roll for the year 1422. Also No. 4174 is prepared for names, but no names are inserted.

The very great importance of these in checking later additions to (*a*) will become obvious.

Thomas Robert was Fellow as early as 1395 and bursar in 1410. *Cf.* Kilner, p. 129*b*.

2. *Catalogus Wilson* (Arch. iv. 17). List on paper of Fellows from beg. to 1572. But mention is made of 1577 and a page is lost. Date prob. c. 1580. Continued hence in other hands; restored to College by Shute Barrington in 1789. Of no independent value for earlier time.

3. *Catalogus Savile* (Arch. iv. 18). List on parchment of Fellows from beg. to 1586—made at Savile's instigation—and subsequently continued thence. Of small independent value for earlier times.

4. *Wood's Catalogues.* In a box in the Treasury, among many other unhappy fragments of Wood's collections for a history of Merton which he intended to write but never did, are various lists of Wardens and Fellows—viz.,

(*a*) Latin Catalogus Sociorum to 1684.

(*b*) Alphl. Catalogue of Fellows from beg. to 1642. Eng. notes.

(*c*) Biographical Notes of Fellows, 1305–1435.

A curious fact may here be noted. These notes of A. W. were complete for the whole time 1264 to 1455. But by some chance two parts, 1264–1305 and 1435–1455, are now in the

Bodleian (MS. Ballard 46), but the middle part is at Merton. The Bodleian sections have been made good for Merton by a copy—now in the Treasury. Similarly the Bodleian deficiency has been supplied by a copy of the Merton section (MS. Ballard, 46*).

(*d*) Catalogue of Fellows, Ed. I. to Hen. IV.

(*e*) Chronl. History of Fellows, 1559–1641.

(*f*) Extracts from College Rolls of Fellows' names.

The many other interesting Wood MSS. in this box must here be passed over. They are now arranged and catalogued.

5. *Astrey's Catalogue* (Arch. iv. 11). Of Wardens and Fellows to 1700, with notes.

6. *Kilner's Edition of Astrey* (Arch. iv. 15). With many citations, comparisons, and notes. Arch. v. 2 is a list of Kilner's own—kept up to 1826.

Catalogues 1*a*, 2, 3 have been kept up to 1898. 1*b* is perhaps the most valuable, as being earliest and never tampered with. For a full account of 1*a*, 2, 3, 5, 6, *cf.* the present Warden's "Memorials," pp. vii.–xiv. The late librarian and bursar, Stephen Edwardes, compiled lists of Fellows, Postmasters, and Commoners, which are very useful.

## ROGER BACON.

MS. *Evidence:* In "Cat. Vet." fol. 59, in list of Fellows of reign Ed. I. is name "Bakon."

This Catalogue most rarely prefixes Christian names.

On above entry note:

(1) "Rogerus" prefixed in later hand.

(2) The name "Bakon" shows signs of erasure. Only "Bak-n" are original letters. The "o" is added in other ink, and there are marks of an erasure here. An erasure also of about four letters' space follows the "n." Thus not room for Baconthorpe, as Astrey, fol. 2*b*. Wood suggested "Bakeridge," but the "n" seems original.

The parchment originals of this reign, MS. 4154, are lost for letters A and B, so here give no help.

"Cat. Wilson" (fol. 8) and Savile (fol. 3) have "Rogerus Bacon" and a long description, but this, of course, is no evidence.

*Difficulties:* Dates are also against the connection. Bacon was born c. 1214, left Oxford for Paris 1245, returned c. 1250, was exiled from England c. 1258, returned c. 1268, was condemned "propter quasdam novitates" 1278, and in prison till 1292, died soon after. Hence he was advanced in years when Merton was founded, and certainly then a Franciscan. No monk by founder's statutes could be a Fellow.

*Conclusion:* Bacon was *not* a Fellow of the College. He may have lectured to students in it. So Astrey, Wood, *et alii.*

*Cf.* Wood, "City," ii. 376; "Annals," 272. Little, "Grey Friars," O.H.S. xx. 191–195. Kilner, Cat. fol. 33*b*, 34.

## DUNS SCOTUS.

A. *Life and Conclusions thence:* Born c. 1270. A Franciscan monk by 1300. B.D. at Oxford and lecturer on "Sentences" soon after. Incepted D.D. at Paris 1304, where taught till 1307. Died at Cologne 1308. (*Cf.* Little, "Grey Friars," O.H.S. xx. 219, 220.)

First two facts turn on entry in list of twenty-two brethren of Franciscan convent presented by Provincial to Bishop of Lincoln at Dorchester for licence to confess and absolve penitents. One of the twenty-two is "Johannem Douns." Wood adds, "procul dubio Johannes Duns Scotus." ("City," ii. 386.) Date of this presentation July 26, 1300. By rule of Franciscan Order "Nullus frater . . . executionem confessionis . . . et prælationis officium . . . habeat . . . nisi qui xxx. annos completos habuit in etate." (Ehrle, ap. Archiv für Lit. und Kirch. Gesch., Band vi. p. 128-9.) Hence—if this is Duns Scotus, he was monk by 1300.

Hence, if ever a Mertonian scholar, as *no monk could be a scholar*, he must have been such a scholar before this: *i.e.*, reign Edward I. But all catalogues, &c., give him to reign Edward II. (*Cf. infra.*)

B. *The Tradition:* Universal tradition makes Duns Scotus scholar of Merton. All here, of course, turns on date to which this can be traced back. The earliest mention of the tradition is this. Among the Merton MSS. are six large and very beautiful ones of Duns Scotus' works on the "Sentences"—viz., G. ii. 4, 5; iii. 1-4 (Nos. 59, 61, &c.). These were all written by one John Reynbold in the years 1451–1455, and each contains a note at the end of which this—in the earliest (G. ii. 5)—may be given as the type:—

> "Explicit lectura Doctoris Subtilis in Universitate Oxoniensi super primum librum Sententiarum, sc. Doctoris Johis. Duns nati in quadam villicula ꝑochiæ de Emyldon vocata Dunstañ. in Comitatu Northumbrie pertinente domui Scolarium de Merton halle in Oxonia, et quondam socii dicte domus. Script. per me Johannem Reynbold Almanicum de Monte-Ornato Anno Dni. Millimo. ccccli°."

In place of "Oxoniensi" G. iii. 2 (1453); ii. 4 (1455); iii. 3 (1455), read "Parisiensi."

A similar MS. of Reynbold's is at Balliol acc. to Wood. MS.

Ballard 46, fol. 70 (from Aubrey? *Cf.* Hearne, O.H.S. xxxiv. p. 237). *Cf.* Astrey, fol. 19. Kilner, p. 63.

Thus, the earliest extant example of the Tradition is of date 1451.

*C. The Catalogues:* The most important piece of evidence is an entry in the "Cat. Vet." fol. 61, No. 15, which gives as name of Fellow, reign Ed. II. what *now* reads "Douns." Hence the identification with Duns Scotus, accepted, of course, and enforced by "Cat. Wils." (p. 18), "Cat. Savile" (p. 8), Astrey, p. 18, assisted by Scotus' association with the College estate of Emyldon. (*Cf.* Kilner, p. 61*b*–63.)

Unfortunately, the entry in the "Cat. Vet." I find to be suspicious, The original writing is "Doune." Not only has a later hand, in ink now faded, added the note, "hic doctor subtilis vulgariter tamen duns," but one little stroke has been added (in other and faded ink) to the final ꝛ (e), converting it into s, thus, ſ!

Finally, we have the actual original entry of Thos. Robert on the back of the parchment Mert. MS. 4173*b*, which original was copied to form the "Cat. Vet." And this reads quite clearly Doun*e* (letter ꝛ), and no note *re* the "doctor subtilis" is added.

*D. Conclusion:* A is suspicious. B shows the small worth of the tradition. C is fatal. I must regretfully conclude that the Franciscan monk, Duns Scotus, was not a scholar of Merton.

## WILLIAM OF OCKHAM.

Said to have been pupil of Duns Scotus, and a Franciscan of Oxford. Incepted D.D. at Paris. At Avignon 1327, Italy 1328; died c. 1349. Connected with Merton by tradition. (Wood, "Annals," 439; "Cat. Wilson," p. 21–24 (reign Ed. II.); "Cat. Savile," p. 9 (*ib.*); Astrey, p. 21.) Connection almost certainly erroneous. Ockham's name does not occur in original of "Cat. Vet." MS. 4173*b* at all. In "Cat. Vet." fol. 61*b*, the names follow thus; 10: "Offord." 11: "Joh. Odyhm." Again a later hand in very faded ink has inserted Ockham's name, but not even between these names, but at the side, thus:

Offord
Joh. Odyhm. G. Occam

It has been proposed to evade these facts thus. In the same list the "Cat. Vet." reads "Gilbt. Peckm."—*i.e.*, Peckham, and the latter catalogues identify him with John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1278. This is, of course, ridiculous. But Kilner, fol. 69*b*, even suggests "Peckm." is a mistake for Ockham! The original MS. 4173*b* reads, however, quite clearly Gy. Peyckhm. and there did

exist a Gilbert Peckham about this time. (*Cf.* Little, *op. cit.* 238.) These desperate efforts are unprofitable. Even Wood rejects Ockham, not finding his name in any Bursars' Accounts. (MS. Ballard, 46*.)

## JOHN WYCLIF.

Born c. 1324 in Yorkshire, of family near Barnard Castle. Traditionally first Commoner at Queen's Coll., then Fellow of Merton, then, in April 1361, Master of Balliol. The last fact is certain. The early connection with Queen's is improbable, as the first mention of his name in Queen's Coll. documents is not till 1363. The connection with Merton has also been denied. The controversy rages at great length. I must content myself with a brief, but I hope a fair, summary of arguments.

The Catalogues, Wilson (p. 40–51), Savile (p. 18), with Astrey (p. 41–44), Wood, and Kilner, accept the connection. This is of small importance. That, however, a "Wyklyf" was Fellow of Merton in 1356 is universally admitted. It is proved by

(*a*) An entry of the name of "John de Wyclyve" in the Bursar's accounts of that year. (*Cf.* Wood, MS. Ballard, 46*.)

(*b*) An entry in "Cat. Vet." fol. 64*b*, regn. Ed. III. No. 24, of name "Wyklyf." A later hand has added the note: "Doctor in Theologia, qui cum nimium in proprio ingenio confidebat, ut primum erat socius istius domus unum annum probationis habuit plenarie in eadem." The first part of this is in bold black, the last (from "ut primum") in very faint, ink. Date of entry unknown.

(*c*) Thos. Robert's original of "Cat. Vet." (MS. 4162) reads

"Wyklyf a° xxx edw †°."

*i.e.*, January 25, 1356–January 24, 1357. Thos. Robert was Fellow in 1395, *i.e.*, only eleven years after Wyclif's death.

That a "Wyklyf" was at Merton in 1356 is certain. That this was *not* John Wyclif the Reformer is argued on two grounds:

(1) *Difficulties of this identification*, viz.: As a Northerner the Reformer would go to Balliol, not to Merton, this being a Southerners' Coll. and even excluding Northerners from Fellowship. And statutably the Balliol Master must have been a Balliol Fellow.

(2) *This identification unnecessary: i.e.*, "another man of the same name" existed in 1356. By identifying the Merton "Wyklyf" with him we avoid the difficulties of (1).

Neither argument appears to me very valid:

(1) There is no proof Northerners were ever actually excluded from Merton, nor, if a promise to exclude them were ever given, of the date of that promise. (*Cf. supra*, p. 46.) Critics now agree in bringing Wyclif to Balliol as an undergraduate. But it seems proved that before 1361 Balliol men "*as soon as they became Masters of Arts, had immediately to leave the Hall*" owing to the great poverty of Balliol. (See Lechler's "John Wycliffe," trans. Lorimer, pp. 97 *sq.*) What more natural than for him then to proceed to Merton for one year, 1356, thence to return to Balliol as Fellow c. 1357, and so to proceed as Master in 1361?

(2) It is certainly proved that there existed one John de Whyteclyve, who in July 1361 was presented to the living of Mayfield in Sussex by the Mertonian Archbishop Islep. (See Shirley, Fasciculi Zizaniorum, Rolls series v. pp. 513 *sq.*) But note two points:

(*a*) By identifying the Merton "Wyklyf" with the Mayfield "Whyteclyve" we do *not* avoid the "Northern" difficulty, which applies just as much to the latter, presumed of Yorkshire, as to the Reformer.

(*b*) This identification is in itself unjustified for this good reason. The Mayfield priest's name occurs four times. It is spelt in three ways, viz.: Whyteclyve, Whytcliff, Whiteclyve. That is, in every instance it contains (i) an *h* (ii) a *t*.

The Reformer's name is spelt in exactly twenty ways. *Not one of those twenty ways* contains either (i) an *h* or (ii) a *t*. (*Cf.* Sergeant, "John Wyclif," p. 83.)

Every one knows that all spelling in those days was largely a matter of taste. But surely the discrepancy between the two names here is much too striking to be explained away thus.

I conclude (*a*) that there is positive evidence associating a "Wyklyf" with Merton in 1356; (*b*) that there is positive evidence against identifying this "Wyklyf" with the Mayfield "Whyteclyve"; (*c*) that there is no positive evidence against identifying this "Wyklyf" with the Reformer; (*d*) that therefore we do well to follow the certainly old tradition, and accept this latter identification.

## JOHN DUMBLETON.

Philosopher and theologian. Name in MS. 4173*b* and all Cat. temp. Ed. II. In Coll. Accounts, however, two names appear—

viz., Thomas de D. 1324, and John de D. 1344, 1349. Hence, as philosopher flourished c. 1320, Wood disbelieves the Mertonian's identity with the philosopher (*loc. cit.*). (*Cf.* Kilner, fol. 62*b*.)

### ROGER SUICET.

Robert Suicet or Swynshed, a subtle logician, whose "Sophismata logicalia," *e.g.*, are to be found discussed in the famous Merton "Logica" of 1483 (p. 142, "et hic finiuntur insolubilia Swynishede"). The name "Swynshed" appears among Fellows, temp. Ed. III. in orig. of "Cat. Vet."—viz., MS. 4162. So "Cat. Vet." fol. 64, and "Cat. Wilson" and "Savile." First two have no Christian name prefixed, and Wood, finding mention of one Richard Swynshead in Coll. accounts of 1339, believes the "Roger" of later Catalogues an unjustifiable addition. (*Cf.* Astrey, p. 97*b*.)

## D.—THE COLLEGE ARMS

The founder obtained licence to bestow the manors of Malden and Farleigh on his House of Scholars from the feudal lord Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, in 1262. This was confirmed by Gilbert de Clare in 1264.

The founder then, according to a common custom, adopted as his arms those of Clare, but with a difference. The arms of Clare were Or, three chevron gules. The founder modified them thus: Or three chevrons per pale: the first, azure and gules; the second, gules and azure; the third, azure and gules. These arms he imparted with the estates to the College, and these are the proper Merton College arms to-day. (*Cf.* Lee, Portcullis Pursuivant, September 1, 1574; ap. Kilner, "Pythagoras' School," p. 52, and seals at end of the copy in Arch. iv. 19.)

Often, however, the Merton shield is represented as parted per pale, and combining the above arms with those of the See of Rochester. The former then are the sinister side of the shield, the latter (Argent, on a saltier gules an escallop Or) the dexter. This shield would then represent the arms of Walter de Merton when Bishop of Rochester.

From the first the College had its common seal, distinct from that of the founder. The two in use to-day go back to the earliest times. The first, the "Sigillum Commune," round, with inscription, "Sigillum Scholarium de Merton," shows our Lord gathering into his bosom five small figures, the "scholars," with a

scroll, on which are the words: "Dni. est. assumpcio. nostra." (The Vulgate rendering of Psalm xxvii. 10. This may be seen in the Vestibule Window in the Library.) The second, the "Sigillum ad Causas," lozenge-shaped, displays the Virgin and Child, with a small praying figure beneath, and the inscription, "S'. Scolarium de Mertona ad cas." The founder's signet ring showed the device of a figure bearing a palm branch, with the motto, "Qui timet Dominum, faciet bona."

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

# INDEX

*Members of the College are distinguished by the following marks prefixed to the name.* * *Warden.* † *Fellow.* ‖ *Postmaster.* ‡ *Exhibitioner.* § *Commoner.*


Abbot, Archbishop, 106, 225, 232
*Abyndon, Henry, 64, 212, 280
†Abyndon, John of, 60, 61, 280
*Abyngdon, Peter de, 36, 37, 55, 62
Acroyde, John, 103, 259, 260
†Adams, John, 231
‖†Adams, William, 165, 174, 236
§Aldrich, George, 173
Alexander I. of Russia, 165
†Allen, Thomas, 80, 239
All Souls' College, 78, 119, 173, 244
Altars in the Chapel, 197, 198, 201, 204, 210
Altar-piece, 216
Anne, Princess, 146
†Appleby, Ambrose, 90
Aristotle. *See* Studies
Aristotle Hall, 62
Arms, College, 293
§Arnold, Edmund, 188, 280
Arundel, Archbishop, 53, 203
†Ashburner, Walter, 175
†Ashynden, John, 40
†Aston, John, 51
Astrolabes, 41, 242
†Astry, Francis, 162, 288
Athletics: the Boats, 272-275; Cricket, 273, 275, 276; Football (Rugby), 177, 276; (Assoc.), 276; Athletic Sports, 277
†Atkins, Anthony, 87
†Atwood, Henry, 90
Aula parva de Merton, 62

Bacon, Roger, 28, 39, 288, 289
†Bainbridge, John, 101, 102, 223, 253
§Baker, C. D., 276
†Baldoc, Ralph, Bp. of London, 41
Ball Court, Merton, 70, 271
Balliol College, 9, 38, 40, 51, 59, 84, 119, 131, 165, 173, 181, 285, 286, 291, 292
Balsham, Hugh, Bp. of Ely, 9
Barnam, Benedict, 254
†Barnarde, Edward, 180
†Barnes, Robert, 81
†Baron, Richard, 204
†Barrington, Shute, Bp. of Durham, 163, 246
‖Bartham, J., 175
*Barton, Henry, 162, 281
Barton, Philip, 281,
Basingstoke, Hospital of S. John, 7
†Bateman, John, 152
§Bathurst, F., 274, 275
"Battys Yn," 55
"Bay Tree Room," The, 257
Beam Hall, 62
Beaumont, Bishop, 32
*Beckynham, Edmund, 37, 53
§Bek, Anthony, Bp. of Durham, 11, 42
§Bek, Thomas, Bp. of Lincoln, 11, 42
Bekes Inn, 61
Bekyngham, John, 61
Bells, The College, 212-214
Benefactions, 279-282; to Library, 239
"Beneficium uberius," 7, 157, 158, 180
‖Bentley, E. C., 278
†Benyer, Thomas, 90
*Berdmore, Scrope, 162, 165, 245, 281

# INDEX


†Berkeley, Will., 132
‖Bernard, D. W., 174
†Berton, William, 52
Bible Clerks, 130, 188, 249
Bickley Exhibition, 92
*Bickley, Thomas, 76, 91–93, 280
†Bigge, E. T., 235
Biham, Gilbert de, 62
Bileby Hall, Great, 60
Bileby Hall, Little, 60
"Black Night," The, 270–272
§Blacker, C. J., 278
‖Blacker, M. J., 274
Blake, Admiral, 255
†Blisse, John, 78
*Bloxham, John, 37, 55, 62, 218, 239
Boats, The. *See* Athletics
Bodleian Library, 80, 100
Bodley Society, The, 278
†Bodley, Sir Thomas, 82, 100, 102, 105, 136, 194, 217, 223, 245, 280
Bonfires, 146, 147
Boniface IX., Pope, 53
Bor Hall, 61
Bowk, John, 222
†Bowman, Thomas, 175, 253
†Bradley, F. H., 175
†Bradwardine, Thos., Archbp. of Canterbury, 39, 41, 236
Brasenose College, 174, 181, 182
†Bredon, Simon, 40
*Brent, Sir Nath., 106–108, 109, 111, 114, 119–121, 123, 125, 126, 129, 133–135, 225, 232
†Brent, Roger, 132
*Brewery College, 147, 192, 210, 259
§Briggs, Henry, 101, 102, 223, 253
†Broad, Francis, 132
*Brodrick, Hon. G. C., 175, 177, 244, 246, 261, 262, 283–285, 288
†Broke, John, 90
Bromis, Thomas, 54
§Brooks, J., 175
†Brown, Thomas, 63
†Browne, Sir Rich., 131
†Brytte, Walter, 51
†Brytwell, Thomas, 51
†Buckingham, John of, 38
Burgesses, University, 135
†Burley, Walter, 39
†Burnet, John, 176
§Burnet, Hon. Thos., 163
‖Burney, C. P., 175
Bursars, The, 21, 24, 25, 192, 193
‖Bush, R. W., 174
†Button, Ralph, 126
Byron, Sir John, 115
†Caird, Edward, 173
Calendar, Merton, 281
Cambridge University, 6, 26, 101, 103, 121, 133, 143, 157, 161
†Campden, John of, 38
Canada, 163, 171
†Candeur, Robert of, 37
Canditch, 45, 65
Canterbury, Archbp. of. *See* Visitor
Canterbury College, 38, 52
"Cantus fractus," 68
‖Capper, J. L., 175
†Cardonnel, William, 148
Casaubon, Isaac, 94, 95, 102
Catalogues of Fellows, 287, 288
Caxton's "Chaucer," 242, 259
‖Chadwick, W., 174, 175
Chaining of Books, 226, 227, 236, 237
†Chamber, John, 103, 186, 187, 280
*Chambers, John, 33, 67, 75, 76, 135, 261
Chapel, Merton. *See* Merton College
Chaplains, The, 18, 22, 25, 64, 192
§Chapman, E., 174
Charles I., 108, 114, 115, 116–123
Charles II., Visits to Oxford, 144–145 (1665), 145–146 (1681)
§Charnock, J., 173
Chaucer, 52, 163, 242
†Chedworth, John, 63
Chests, Loan, Jocalium, 194; Rede, 194, 195; Bodley, 105, 194, 195; Wyllyot, 194; Lee, 194; Kemp, 194; Parsons, 195
Chetyngdon, Will. de, 200
†Cheynell, Francis, 110, 119, 124, 125, 132, 135
Chichele, Archbp., 54, 64, 109
Chillingworth, Will., 110, 119
Christ Church, 76, 83, 101, 104, 109, 115–119, 145, 147, 154, 165, 174, 181, 182
Christmas festivities, 266–270
Christopher Hall, 58, 61
Church, The English, and Merton College, 30–34, 42, 64, 112, 124, 139, 140, 169, 182
Church Society, The, 278
§Churchill, Lord Randolph, 171, 178
Clare, Rich. de, Earl of Gloucester, 292
*Clayton, Sir Thos., 135, 140–149, 150
‖Cleminshaw, E., 175
‡Cochrane, C. W. H., 278

# INDEX


Codinton, Walter de, 197, 198
‖Colefax, H. A., 174
‖Coleridge, Hartley, 173
Collegiate System, The, 26
†Colmer, Jasper, 105
Cologne Cathedral, 199
Colsyll Hall, 62
§Colvile, A. H., 276
Commemoration of Benefactors, 87, 281, 282
Commissions : Royal, 46, 168; Parliamentary, 166–169, 182, 184, 188
Common Room. *See* Merton College
Commoners, The, 11, 25, 96, 143, 189–191, 219, 249
‖†Compton, Berdmore, 167, 174
‖†Compton, B. D., 174
‖Compton, F., 173, 274
§Compton, J., 274
‖†Compton, J. C., 174
†Conant, John, 271
"Constitution Club," The, 155–156
‖Copleston, R., 174
†Corbet, Edward, 119, 120, 124, 125
Corner Hall, 61, 74
†Cornwallis, James, Bp. of Lichfield, 163
Corpus Christi College, 11, 57, 60–62, 77, 78, 116, 117, 131, 145, 152, 173, 174, 182, 214, 229, 262
Courtenay, Archbp., 52, 53
Courtenay, Richard, 53
†Courtney, W. L., 176
Cowley, Abraham, 123, 261
‖Craik, J. G. E., 274, 278
†Cranley, Thos. de, Archbp. of Dublin, 38, 42
Cranmer, Archbp., 76, 84–86
‖†Creighton, Mandell, Bp. of London, 171, 174, 178, 275
Cricket. *See* Athletics.
†Croft, Francis, 132
§Crompton, Sir Thos., 135
Cromwell, Oliver, 124, 126, 128, 131, 134–136, 139, 252
Cromwell, Thomas, 78
Croxford, John of, 60
‖†Crump, F. C., 174, 177
‖Crump, L. M., 177, 276
†Cruttwell, C. J., 174, 175
†Currer, C. S., 175, 262
Curteys Hall, 61
"Custos." *See* Warden
"Custos Interior," 17
Cuxham, 14, 72

†Dale, F. H. B., 175
§Dalison, J. B., 274
‖Dallin, T. F., 173
‖†Davies, T., 174
†Dawkes, Robert, 87
Deans, The, 23–25, 113, 192
†Dear, R. C. L., 174
Debating Society, The, 277, 278
†Denison, Edward, Bp. of Salisbury, 171, 242, 246
Discipline, 17, 18, 23, 36, 67
"Disputations," 47, 67, 82, 112
†Dollyng, Thomas, 223, 280
"Domus Scolarium de Merton." At Malden, 3–8, 14; moved to Oxford, 9, 20
Dormitory, The Library never a, 229, 230
§Downes, Robert, 163
Dublin University, 136, 161
†Duffield, William, 239
‖Dugdale, J. S., 171
†Dumbleton, John, 39, 292
Duns Scotus. *See* Scotus
*Durant, William, 37, 218, 222, 239
‖†Dyson, F., 174

†Earle, John, Bp. of Salisbury, 96–99, 102, 217, 223, 263
†Eaton, J. R. T., 172
Edmund, Prince, 13
Edward, Prince (later Edward I.), 10, 13, 20, 199, 279
Edward II., 40, 42, 43, 59, 60, 279
Edward III., 62
Edward VI., 41, 79, 84, 85, 92
‖†Edwardes, Stephen, 174, 242, 245, 261, 288
†Edwards, Thomas, 207, 208
Ela Longspee, Countess of Warwick, 37, 66, 279, 281
"Electio Librorum," 237, 238
†Elgin, James Bruce, Earl of, 171
Elinor of Castile, Queen, 199, 200
Elizabeth, Queen, 82, 87, 91, 95, 104, 105
§Ellis, H., 278
‖Ellison, J. H. J., 276
Elm Hall, 60
Erasmus, 76
§Essex, Robert Devereux, Earl of 97, 104
†Esson, William, 173
Estates, College, 2–6, 13, 14, 19, 22, 37, 63, 66, 285
Eton College, 106, 186, 187
Eton Postmasterships, 103
Evesham, Battle of, 10

# INDEX


Exeter Cathedral, 55, 197
Exeter College, 38, 51, 84, 103, 115, 131, 144, 154, 166, 173, 181, 239
Exhibitioners, The, 185, 188, 190

"FANTASMA Radulphi," 52
‖†Farrer, H. R., 174
Fellows, The, 19, 55, 167–169, 179–184, 191
Finance, College, 193, 194
†Fisher, Alex., 141, 144, 211, 214, 215, 217, 223, 280
†Fisher, Richard, 180
‖Fisher, W. W., 174
Fitzralph, Archbp., 56
*Fitzjames, Richard, 66, 68–73, 84, 210, 211, 231, 239, 253, 254, 280, 281
Fleming, Richard, 53
"Fleur de Luce Inn," 55
Flixthorpe, Rob. of, 12
†Fodryngeye, Henry of, 37
Football. *See* Athletics
†Forde, John, 203
Forderinghey, W. de, 59
Forster, Anthony, of Cumnor, 89
†Forster, John, 47
‡Foster, T. S., 278
§Foster, W. H., 274
Founder's Kin, 15, 33, 180, 184, 185
Founder's Prayers, 282
‖Fowle, F. W., 174
‖Fowler, Thomas, 173
Foxe, Bishop, 61, 62, 74, 77
†Franke, Thomas, 133
†Franklyn, Richard, 136
"Fratres," The, 4, 14, 21, 22
§Fraser, J. A., 277
§Frazer, E. C., 276
‡Frazer, J. R. F., 277
‖†Freeling, G. N., 174, 261
§Freeman, W. L., 274, 275
†French, John, 126, 132
‖French, T. H., 276
Friars, The. *See* Monastic Orders

†GADDESDEN, John of, 40
Gamlingay, 13
Garden, *See* Merton College
Garden-Master, The, 192
†Gardiner, S. R., 138, 173
‖Garrod, H. B., 175
†Gate, Roger, 203
Gaudies, 133, 142, 270
George I., 154, 156
*Gervaise, James, 76, 87–89
§Giffard, S. H. *See* Halsbury, Earl of
†Gifford, Roger, 89, 90
†Gilbert, John, Archbp. of York, 163
*Gilbert, Robert, 53, 62, 63
*Goddard, Jonathan, 134–136, 138
§Goddard, W. S., 163
Godstow Nunnery, 60, 61
"Golden Election," The, 153
§Gooch, F. H., 277
§Goodrich, E. S., 175
Goodwin, Colonel, 116
Goseman de Sylva, Don, 91
Goter Hall, 61
†Goulburn, E. M., 172
‖Goulburn, F. A., 173
Government of College, 191–195
†Gower, Henry, Bp. of S. David's 42
Grace in Hall, 250
"Grammaticus," The, 16, 17, 44
‖Grant, A., 173
†Gravesend, Stephen de, Bp. of London, 41
†Greaves, John, 102, 132
†Green, John, Bp. elect of Worcester, 42
†Greynville, John of, 60, 61
†Griffith, "Mo," 176
‖†Grimes, G. D., 174
‖Grimwood, F. St. Clair, 223
Grindal, Archbp., 92
Grocyn, William, 76, 80
Grope Lane, 61
Grove, Merton. *See* Merton College
§Gulston, A. S., 274
Gunter, Edmund, 101
*Gygur, John, 65, 239

†HAKEBORNE, Rich. de, 222, 223
Halegod, John, 11
†Hales, John, 102
Hall, The. *See* Merton College
‖Hall, J. R., 274
†Hall, William, 88–90
§Halsbury, S. H. Giffard, Earl of, 171, 178, 274
†Hamilton, W. K., Bp. of Salisbury, 171
‖†Hammond, G., 174, 246, 281
§Hammond, J. R., 274
†Hampsterley, Ralph, 185, 223, 280, 281
‖Hannam, A. A., 277
†Hardcastle, T., 172
§Harding, A. R., 274
*Harper, Thomas, 73
Hart Hall, 47

# INDEX


*Harvey, William, 121–123, 132, 135, 143, 245
†Haryngton, Will. of, 60, 61, 280
†Haydok, Hamund, 239
Hays, Thomas, 79
†Head, Sir E. W., 171, 246
§Helme, R., 277
†Henderson, B. W., 175
Henrietta Maria, Queen, 108; at Merton, 116–119
Henry III., 1, 3, 10–14, 20, 251
Henry V., 53, 62
Henry VI., 32, 64
Henry VIII., 75, 85, 243
†Herbert, Hon. Will., 163
Herlewyne, Christina, 12
Herlewyne, Roger, 12
Herprut, Henry, 12
Herring, Archbp., 180
Hert Hall, 59
†Heth, Robert, 180
†Hewes, Thomas, 280
§Heygate, W. U., 274
Heygham, Simon, 60
†Heywood, Jasper, 80, 268
†Higgs, Griffin, 162, 239, 241, 280
"High Borlace Club," The, 156
§Hildyard, H. C. T., 275
†Hobhouse, Edmund, Bp. of Nelson, 34, 172, 176, 236, 242, 284
†Hobhouse, L. T., 176
*Holcote, Elias, 64, 204
*Holland, John, 153, 154
Holt, Thomas, 103, 259, 260
Holywell, Manor of, 13, 45, 74, 193
Hooper, Bishop, 87
†Hope [–Scott], J. R., 165–168
†Horkstowe, Walter of, 60, 61
"Hortus Mertonensis," 263
†Hothun, William de, Archbp. of Dublin, 42
†How, W. W., 242
†Howson, Nicholas, 132
†Hulman, Thomas, 51
‖Hume, John, Bp. of Salisbury, 163
Hungerford, Sir W., 280
Hunsingore, Rich., 60, 61, 209
†Huntingdon, Rob., 163, 239
Hus, John, 50, 64
†Hyde, David de la, 80, 87
Hymns in Hall, 87–89

"IGNIS Regentis," 268
Independents and Presbyterians, 123–125, 134, 135, 139
†Islep, Simon, Archbp. of Canterbury, 38, 41, 292

§JACKSON, Henry, 187, 188, 223, 281
†Jacob, Henry, 16, 17
"Jacob the Jew," 11, 258
James I., 104
James II., 146, 148
†James, William, 51
†Jervis, Henry, 280
‖†Jessop, Thomas, 103, 188, 280, 281
Jesus College, 103, 173, 182
‖Jewell, John, Bp. of Salisbury, 86, 87
"John the Chaplain," 44
§Jollye, H. C., 277
Jones, L. W., 175
†Jones, Thomas, 141, 213
Juxon, Archbp., 141, 148

KATHERINE of Aragon, Queen, at Merton, 74, 104
Katherine of Braganza, Queen, at Merton, 144–146
Keble College, 173, 182
†Kemp, John, Archbp. of Canterbury, 63, 203, 281
‖Kemp, Thomas, Bp. of London, 63, 69, 280, 281
§Kenney, E. M., 276
§Kent, Henry, 239
"Kill-Bull," The, 270
†Kilner, Samuel, 162, 283, 284, 288
Kilwardby, Archbp., 24
§King, A., 277
†King, Charles, 153
†King, J. R., 175
§King-Peirce, W. G., 274
Knight Hall, 62
Knightley Lecture, The, 162
†Knox, Edmund, Bp. of Coventry, 171
†Kyllyngworth, John, 222

LAMPLUGH, Thos., Archbp. of York, 255
†Lang, Andrew, 175
†Langton, John de, Bp. of Chichester, 41
†Lankester, E. Ray, 173
Laud, Archbp., 16, 106, 110–114, 121, 140, 158, 180, 192, 249
Law. *See* Studies
Leach, William, 239
Lectern, The, 69, 211
Leden Porche Hall, 61
†Lee, John, 132
†Lee, Thomas, 194, 280, 281
†Leech, James, 88, 89, 280
Lenthal, Speaker, 255
§Lewin, F. H., 274
Leycestre, Will. de, 13
"Liber bestiarius," The, 63

"Liber ruber," The, 12, 235
Librarian, Office of, 25, 136, 137, 241
Library, The. *See* Merton College
Life-Fellows, 31
‖†Lightfoot, J., 174
Limes, The Merton, 265, 266
Linacre Lectureships, 81, 82, 101
Linacre, Thomas, 76, 80–82
Lincoln College, 52, 84, 103, 107, 119, 126, 131, 133, 143, 144, 153, 154, 157, 173, 181, 182, 244
†Lindestede, Adam of, 60, 61
Littlemore Nunnery, 12, 59
Livings, College, 13, 14
Logic, Merton, 42–44
Lollards, The, 50–54
Lomb Hall, 60
Longley, Archbp, 182
‖Lucas, W. H., 174
†Luke, John, 53
*Lydall, Richard, 132, 152, 215
Lyndewood, Will., 54
†Lyndon, John, 228
†Lynley, Thomas, 280, 281

§McEwan, G. L., 276
‖Mackarness, G., Bp. of Argyll, 171
‖Mackarness, J. F., Bp. of Oxford, 171, 173, 274
Magdalen College, 63, 65, 68, 76, 78, 91, 115, 116, 119, 129, 131, 148, 161, 174, 181, 189, 210, 268
Magdalen Hall, 181
‖Magee, J. A. V., 278
‖Maguire, J. R., 173
†Mahu, John, 204
Malden (Surrey), 2–5, 7, 14, 15, 18, 19
§Malmesbury, James Harris, Earl of, 163
†Mamesfeld, Henry de, 199, 200
*Man, John, 76, 87–91
†Manning, Henry Ed. Cardinal, 165
Marian Persecution, The, 85, 86
‖Markby, Sir W., 173
Marlborough, Duke of, 154
‖Marsden, R. G., 274, 275
Marsh, Adam, 29
Marsh, Nicholas, 255
Marshall, John, Bp. of Llandaff, 211, 215, 280
§Marsham, C. D., 275, 276
§Marsham, C. J. B., 275
*Marsham, Rob. Bullock, 165, 177, 244, 246
†Martial, William, 86
Martin, Edmund, 135, 152, 153, 280
†Martivall, Roger de, Bp. of Salisbury 41
†Martok, John, 69, 211, 280, 281
Martyr, Peter, 85, 86
†Mason, Francis, 97, 102
§Master, E. T., 274
‖Maude, J., 276
†Maudith, John, 40
†Meadowcourt, Rich., 155–157
Medicine. *See* Studies
§Melland, F. H., 274
†Mepham, Simon, Archbp. of Canterbury, 41
Merton College:
Chapel, 10, 11, 12, 56, 63, 68, 89, 109, 170, 192, 196–223, 256
(services), 18, 35, 112, 186, 219–221, 282
(monuments), 64, 99, 105, 106, 150, 172, 210, 217, 218, 221–223
(Tower), 56, 146, 206–209
"Our Lady's Chapel," 209
Common Room:
(Senior), 143, 193, 261
(Junior), 278
Entrance Gateway and Tower, 12, 56, 250–252
Garden:
(Fellows'), 11, 57–60, 149, 159–161, 263–266
(Bachelors'), 11, 60–62, 74
(Warden's), 58, 59, 265
Grove, The, 61, 117, 152, 261, 262, 271
Hall, 10, 12, 57, 83, 102, 104, 117, 193, 215, 243–246, 260, 261
(Meals), 7, 35, 113, 188, 190, 247–250
Library, 12, 41, 54, 56, 67, 69, 71, 109, 136, 183, 190, 193, 208, 212, 224–236, 255, 262, 263
(Books and MSS.), 39, 44, 49, 77, 79, 80, 95, 161, 163, 236–242, 259, 289, 292
New Buildings, 102, 170, 262
Quadrangles:
(Front), 13, 102, 109, 150, 250–253,
(Fellows'), 41, 102, 103, 146, 254, 259–261,
("Mob"), 147, 150, 224, 255–258, 262, 278
("Patey's"), 117, 258
Queen's Chamber, 117, 134, 253
Sacristy, 112, 117, 193, 200, 209, 240, 242, 256, 257–259

# INDEX


Merton College—*continued*
Treasury or Muniment Room, 193, 258, 259
Warden's House, 56, 68, 108, 129, 149, 152, 193, 250, 252, 253–254
Merton Priory, 2, 8
Merton Street. *See* S. John Baptist's Street
Merton, Walter de, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 10–15, 18, 20, 24–26, 29–33, 68, 98, 169, 177, 245–247, 251, 279, 281, 282, 293
§Messel, L. C. R., 275
Methodist Movement, The, 157
‖Milman, H. S., 173
Milton, John, 128, 129
"Ministers of the Altar," The, 3, 4, 15, 22. *See also* Chaplains
"Mob" Quadrangle. *See* Merton College
‖Moens, S. M., 175
†Mollond, Simon, 280
Monastic Orders, 6, 27–29, 48, 49, 51, 56
(Dominicans), 27–29
(Franciscans), 27–29, 288–290
†Monmouth, John de, Bp. of Llandaff, 42
Monmouth's Rebellion, 147
Montfort, Simon de, 1, 2
‖Montgomery, W. P., 277
‖Moore, H. W., 173
*More, John de la, 37
†Moseley, H. N., 173
‖Mountain, J. G., 274
Mulberry Tree, The, 59, 265
Muniment Room. *See* Merton College (Treasury).

†Napier, A. S., 173
†Nares, E., 172
Nevile's Inn, 61, 74
New Buildings. *See* Merton College
New College, 9, 38, 39, 76, 78, 85, 87, 131, 181, 205, 206, 221, 239, 243
§Newland, F. W., 277
"New Learning," The, 76–81
Nicholas III., Pope, 25, 32
§Nicholl, H. F., 277
†Nicholls, Peter, 239, 280
"North and South," 45–47, 292
Northampton, 5, 10, 116
Numbers in College, 2 (*8*), 3 (*20*), 5, 7, 15, 35 (*40*), 64, 65, 66, 75, 84 (*32*), 96, 109 (*35*), 110 (*23*), 165, 170, 179, 184, 188, 190 (*105*)
Nun Hall, 12, 22, 59, 61, 180

Ockham, William of, 39, 50, 271, 290, 291
Organ in Chapel, 68, 212, 220, 221
Oriel College, 38, 53, 75, 84, 103, 132, 155, 168, 173, 181, 243
†Osborn, Montagu, 236
Owen, George, 79
†Owen, William, 132
Oxford City, 45, 115
Oxford Press, Early, 39
"Oxoniam Quare" Room, 257–258

Padua, 75
§Paine, M. H., 277
Paris, University of, 6, 28, 29
Parker, Archbishop, 24, 87, 88, 90–92, 238
§Parker, W. W., 275
†Parkhurst, John, Bp. of Norwich, 85, 86
Parliaments at Oxford, 108, 145, 146
"Parvuli," The, 8, 12, 15, 18, 22, 180, 185
†Patteson, John Coleridge, 172, 223
Pattison, Mark, 94, 102
Peckham, Archbishop, 24, 30, 33, 35, 36, 44, 247, 290
§Peel, St. V., 274
Pembroke College, 131, 141
Pembroke, Philip, Earl of, 110, 126
Pestilence at Oxford, 72, 92, 108
Peterhouse, Cambridge, 9
*Phillips, Rowland, 75
‖Phillips, W. A., 278
Physicians, Royal College of, 75, 79, 143
†Pigou, Robert, 281
Plate, College, 119, 143, 146, 148, 184
Plays performed at Merton, 83
‖Pocock, I. J. I., 274, 275
"Poculum Charitatis," The, 270
†Pollen, J. H., 219
†Pont, Nicholas, 52
Portionistæ, The. *See* Postmasters
Portraits:
(In Hall), 40, 245, 246
(In Common Room), 75, 123, 261
Posterns in City Wall, 11, 42, 43, 59, 260
Postmasters, The, 19, 25, 37, 54–56, 62, 67, 68, 83, 96, 103, 113, 184–189, 190, 193, 219, 243, 270
Postmasters' Hall, 36, 37, 62, 150, 186
†Pott, John, 90
Potter, Archbishop, 158

# INDEX


†Potton, Geoffrey, 228
Principal of the Postmasters, 25, 55, 185, 190, 192
Priority of Merton College, 8, 9, 285, 286
Probation, Year of, 23, 182
Proctors, Merton, 42
"Progress" of the Warden, 22, 25
†Puller, Sir C., 163

QUADRANGLES. *See* Merton College
Queen's Chamber. *See* Merton College
Queen's College, 38, 78, 115, 119, 131, 173, 181, 243, 291

‖RAIKES, R. T., 274, 275
†Randolph, J. J., 181
*Rawlyns, Richard, 61, 62, 73–75, 78
†Raynham, John, 239
Raynold, Archbishop, 24
*Raynolds, Thomas, 76, 81, 84, 85, 87
Reading Abbey, 11, 196, 200
"Rectors of the Choir," 67, 68
†Rede, William, Bp. of Chichester, 38, 41, 54, 80, 194, 228, 229, 236, 239, 280, 281
Reform, University, 166–169
Register, The College, 65, 72, 73, 192, 283
†Reinold, A. W., 175
"Research," 30
"Rex Fabarum," The, 267, 268
Reynbold, John, 289
Reynolds, Archbishop, 37
*Reynolds, Edward, Bp. of Norwich, 97, 102, 124–127, 131, 135, 138–140, 214, 280
†Rhŷs, John, 173
†Rhysborough, John, 228
Richard, King of the Romans, 13, 14, 279
§Richards, F. J., 274
‖Richardson, W. M., 172
‖†Ricketts, G., 174
Robert the Chaplain, 197
†Robert, Thomas, 287, 291
‖Robeson, F. E., 274
*Robinson, John, 162
Rochester Cathedral, 25
*Rodeborne, Thomas, 53, 56, 63, 250
Roe, C. A., 171, 175
†Rolleston, George, 173
Roman Catholics and Protestants, 84–93
†Romnysbury, Walter, 211
Roodloft, The, 68, 69, 210, 219–221
†Rooke, Sir Giles, 163, 174, 246
"Rosa Medicinæ," 40
Roses, Wars of the, 65
Runsive Hall, 60
†Rygge, Robert, 52

SACRISTY, The. *See* Merton College
S. Alban Hall, 11, 12, 47, 58, 59, 102, 109, 112, 170, 252, 254–255, 278
S. Cross. *See* Holywell.
‡St. Cyres, Viscount, 174
S. Edmund Hall, 181
S. Edward's Parish, 27
S. Frideswyde's Priory, 12, 60, 61
S. Giles' Church, 48
S. John Bapt. Church, 11, 20, 170, 196. *See* Merton College (Chapel)
S. John Bapt. Hall, 62
S. John Bapt. Parish, 10, 58, 170
S. John Bapt. Street, 10, 62
S. John's College, 103, 109, 131, 132, 174, 182
S. John's Coll., Camb., 81, 103
S. Mary V. Church, 47, 48, 53, 104
S. Peter's-in-the-East, 13, 170
S. Scholastica's Day, Riot on, 48, 49
‖Saintsbury, G. E. B., 175
‖Sargent, J. Y., 174, 175
"Satrapae" or "Tibicines," 268, 269
*Savile, Sir Henry, 41, 66, 76, 77, 94–106, 162, 217, 223, 225, 233, 236, 239
†Savile, Thomas, 104, 136, 240
Savilian Professorships, 41, 100, 101
Say, Lord, 116
Schidyard Street, 60, 61
"Scholares Secundarii," 18, 19
"Scholars," Merton, 3–26, 55, 179. *See* also Fellows, Postmasters
Qualifications for Election, 6, 7, 8, 15, 22, 29, 113, 157–158, 180–181
Scholasticism, 42, 77
Schools, The Old, 103
†Scott, G. R., 174
§Scott, H. J., 277
†Scott, Walter, 174, 175
Scotus, Duns, 28, 37, 40, 78, 80, 245, 271, 289, 290
"Scrutinies," 23, 25, 44, 45, 193

# INDEX


"Sculpture," The Antique, 251
Seals, The College, 293–294
†Searles, Robert, 86
Sedley, Charles, 188, 280
*Sever, Henry, 57, 65, 218, 239, 253, 280, 281
‖Sewell, William, 166, 173
‖†Seymour, Sir G. H., 171, 174, 246
§Shaw, J. L., 274
Shotover, 137
§Simcoe, J. G., 163
†Simonson, William, 280
Site, Acquisition of, 9–14, 57–62
Skerne, Robert, 61
§Skipp, John, 216
†Skrine, J. H., 175
†Smyth, Richard, 85, 86
‖Somers-Smith, R. V., 277
"Sophismata Logicalia," 39
Sorbonne, Robert de, 29
§Spankie, J., 274
Spencer, Lord, 242
‖Sperling, C. G., 175
Spicer, Walter le, 60
Stamford Schism, The, 45, 46
Stapledon Hall, 47
‖†Stapylton, W. C., 174, 274, 275, 278
Stated General Meetings, 25, 193
Statutes, (1264), 3–9; (1270), 6, 14–19, 20, 22, 23, 31; (1274), 6, 9, 16, 19–24, 31; (1857), 168, 169; (1877–82), 169
‖Steele, Sir Richard, 161
Stone, Priory of, 13
†Stoneham, Robert, 204
Stow-in-the-Wold, 115
†Stratford, John de, Archbp. of Cant., 41
†Stratford, Robert de, Bp. of Chichester, 41
†Strode, Ralph, 52
§Stuart, W. C., 277
Studies, 15–17, 78–80, 82, 100, 101, 162, 167–169
(Theology), 15, 16, 29, 30, 33, 99, 162, 182
(Philosophy), 15, 16, 33
(Arts), 15, 17, 33
(Medicine), 33, 36, 40, 41, 75, 79, 81
(Law), 15, 31, 33, 36
(Mathematics), 40, 100, 101, 152, 162
(Astronomy), 40, 41, 78, 101
Sub-Warden, The, 21, 22, 24–26, 191, 192
†Suicet, Roger, 36, 293
Summerhouse, The, 149, 265
Sumner, Archbishop, 168
Sundials, The, 41, 253, 260, 265
"Surrey Domus," The. *See* Malden
Sutton, Oliver, Bp. of Lincoln, 24, 200, 201
†Swynshed, Roger. *See* Suicet
Sympson, Mary, 221, 281

TAIT, Archbishop, 182
§Taylor, C. S., 175
Tenison, Archbishop, 152, 158
Terrace, The Garden, 59, 60, 265
‖Thackeray, F. St. J., 173
Theology. *See* Studies
‖Thomas, A. E., 175
"Tibicines." *See* Satrapae
†Tierney, George, 265
Tillotson, Archbishop, 152
*Tindall, Henry, 76
§Tompson, R. H. D., 274
†Tonworth, Rich. de, 38
"Town and Gown," 48, 49, 143
‖†Townsend, E. J., 174
Tractarian Movement, The, 165
Treasury, The. *See* Merton College
*Trenge, Robert, 37, 44, 45, 209, 218, 222
†Tresham, William, 85, 86
Trinity College, 110, 119, 131, 143
Trinity Coll. Camb., 83, 103, 143, 243
‖†Trowe, Gilbert, 172
"Tucking," 269
†Turk, John, 61
†Turner, Peter, 102, 110, 112, 114–116, 121, 122, 132
†Turslington, John, 46
Twyne, Brian, 151, 284
†Tyrwhitt, Thomas, 163

†UFFORD, John de, Archbp. of Cant., 41
University College, 9, 38, 84, 90, 103, 119, 131, 156, 173, 181, 285, 286
Urban Hall, 61

"VARIATIONS," 70, 71, 77, 82, 162
*Vaughan, Peter, 165, 175
Vernon, Dorothy, 187, 281
‖Vernon, H. M., 174, 175
Vice-Chancellors, Merton, 42, 162
"Vice-Custos." *See* Sub-Warden
‖†Villiers, E. E., 174

# INDEX


Visitations: (1276), 24; (1284), 35; (1384), 52; (1411), 53; (1425), 54, 64; (1535), 78; (1550), 79; (1562), 90; (1638–41), 110–114; (1646–1659), 123–138; (1737–1738), 158–159
Visitor, The, 21, 195
(Bp. of Winchester), 5, 24, 195
(Archbp. of Canterbury), 24, 159, 195
(The Crown), 120, 121, 138, 195

§Wade, C. G., 276
Wadham College, 103, 154, 181, 182
"Wail of the University," The, 49
Wake, Archbishop, 158, 181
†Wake, Sir Isaac, 102, 135
‖Walker, F. P. C., 278
§Walker, T. H., 274
Wall, City, 10–12, 59, 60, 264
†Wall, John, 246
‖Wallace, A. J., 175
†Wallace, William, 173, 174, 241
Walsh, Will., Bp. of Dover, 255
Walter de Merton. *See* Merton
†"Walter the Procurator," 202
*Wantynge, John de, 37, 218, 222
†Ward, Robert, 86
Warden, The (in Surrey), 2–8, 14, 17, 19
(at Oxford), 21–23, 26, 36, 191
Warden's House. *See* Merton College
Warham, Archbishop, 74, 75
Warton, Thomas, 156
‖†Watkinson, Joseph, 223, 280
‡Watson, W. J. R., 277
Waynflete, Will. of, 63
†Wayte, John, 70
Welsh Students, 47
*Wendover, John, 37 228
*Werblysdon, Richard, 36, 37
Wesley, John, 50
Wheatley Bridge, 137
"Whigs and Tories," 51, 153–157, 159, 160
‖†Whish, H. F., 174
Whitgift, Archbishop, 225, 233
§Whiting, A. D., 276
Whytton, John, 218
†Wickford, Robert, Archbp. of Dublin, 42
William III., 145, 148, 152
§Williams, H. H., 275
‖†Wilson, R. J., 173
†Winchelsey, Rob. de, Archbp. of Cant., 41
Winchester, Bishop of, 5, 24, 195
Winchester College, 38, 163, 187
Winchester Diocese, 6
Windows (Chapel), 63, 199, 200, 203–206, 215, 216
(Library), 224, 225, 232–236, 293
(Hall), 244
†Wolley, John, 80, 82
Wolsey, Cardinal, 76
Wolvercote, 13, 144
‖Wood, Anthony, 17, 43, 58, 62, 88, 129, 130, 133, 134, 137, 140, 141, 149, 150–151, 152, 201, 208, 212, 213, 214, 215, 223, 242, 257, 269, 287, 288
†Wood, Edward, 129, 133
‖Wood, G. R., 276
Worcester College, 174, 182
§Worth, Edward, 188, 280
†Wortley, James Stuart, 171
†Wyclif, John, 38, 39, 50–54, 83, 84, 291–292
Wykeham, Will. of, 13, 38, 205, 206
†Wyking, Vincent, 204
†Wyllyot, John, 19, 46, 54–56, 184, 185, 228, 236, 280, 281
†Wyndham, T. H., 173
*Wyntle, Robert, 135, 158, 159

†Yiftele, Simon of, 60, 61, 280

Zodiac, Signs of the, 41



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